

# wethersfield LIFE

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*See story on page 20*

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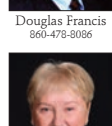
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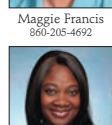
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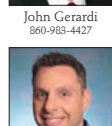
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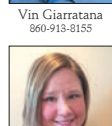
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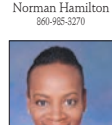
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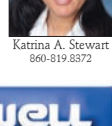
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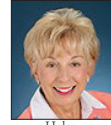
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# Wethersfield LIFE

**February 2017**

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## QUOTE OF NOTE:

"More than half the property in the city is not taxable." - *Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin*

**See story page 6**

## ON THE COVER

Wethersfield native Kayla Rodriguez is a professional dancer who also teaches a beginning ballet class at Dance 10 Studios.

Photo by Lisa Brisson  
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Ameya Grace-Pearson, left, and Ava Padewski review their design.



Design lab teacher Marjorie Bruch offers guidance to students.



Ayaan Appaiah, left, and Beckett Krajewski get down to work.



Seja Allababidi focuses upon the task at hand.

# Learning the process

CREC Discovery Academy students extend learning to new design lab

by Mark Jahne  
Editor

**T**he task on this day was to take basic craft supplies and create a simple but sturdy bridge. Once the instructions were finalized, the first-graders eagerly launched into the project.

They were among the first participants to use the newly opened design lab at the CREC Discovery Academy in town. The lab is considered an integral part of the regional magnet school's overall STEM approach to learning.

STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and mathematics. This is the first such facility in any CREC elementary school.

All students in grades pre-kindergarten through five will take classes in the lab once a week. The work is designed to be hands-on and will focus on three program areas: engineering design, coding

and robotics.

Marjorie Bruch is the design lab teacher. She works under the supervision of Clare Nesperalla, the school's STEM coach. Design lab is considering an addition to the other so-called "specials" stu-

excited to have the opportunity to not only be the design lab teacher, but to help develop its curriculum and steer its future.

The thought of building the program from the ground up provides her with plenty of motivation.

**"The engineering and design process is really a problem-solving process."**

**-Clare Nesperalla**

dents enjoy each week such as art, gym, music and the library/media center.

Bruch taught third grade in a downstate regional school district and then served as the instructional and technology coach for the Branford Public Schools. She is

She is actively seeking input from classroom teachers as well as from the school's administration and other staff.

The whole idea is to integrate the design lab with all of the classroom learning already taking place.

"This has been really exciting

to see so far," Bruch said.

Before starting any construction, the students had to create designs of the bridges they proposed to create. Emphasis was placed on stability and weights would be used to test the strength of the finished products.

Everyone was encouraged to follow the five gears that represent the creative process: ask, imagine, plan, create and improve. The last one might be the most important because the idea is to figure out how to make each effort better, not create the best bridge in the classroom on the first try.

"Your goal is to build a strong and stable bridge," Bruch said.

That meant following an order and sequence of steps. Nesperalla is





CREC first-graders Jaydalis Santiago, Josiah Mercado, Eternity Gabriel-Clair and Lilly Hand, from left, prepare to put their designs into action.

Working together to build bridges are, from left, Matthew Imperato, Gabriel Echevarria, Obed Rodriguez, and Kareem Hamama.



convinced that this helps them throughout the entire school day. She added that the youngest students, those enrolled in the pre-kindergarten program, study various materials and their basic properties in the lab.

If a design proved faulty, that's OK. Students were encouraged to just try something else. Working in groups of three or four, the kids

shared ideas as well as work in crafting the structures.

Teamwork is also required when they have their robotics lessons.

"Robotics is applied coding," she explained. "The engineering and design process is really a problem-solving process."

A team of teachers met over the summer to write the curriculum for

the new design lab from scratch.

They are adapting it as they go.

Neseralla smiled and described that approach as continuing to build the airplane while already flying it. **WL**

Measuring the length of their bridge are, from left, Ayaan Appaiah, Beckett Krajewski and Mason Yang.



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# A rocky reception

Hartford's mayor comes to town seeking support for financially ailing city

by Mark Jahne  
Editor

**H**artford Mayor Luke Bronin knew what to expect. This wasn't his first suburban presentation and the fact that it was standing room only in council chambers at town hall suggested there were a lot of people who had plenty to say.

But he didn't shy away from the challenge or from his mission of countering false information while at the same time pleading the case that Hartford and its suburbs are inextricably linked and all would suffer if the city's current financial crisis results in bankruptcy.

Photo by Mark Jahne

Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin has been visiting the suburbs to encourage regional solutions and changes in the laws to help his city avoid bankruptcy. He spoke in Wethersfield the evening of Jan. 9.

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He also admitted right up front that he was not asking Wethersfield and its taxpayers for money. Mayor Paul Montinieri reinforced that in his introductory remarks.

"I do not support taking taxpayer money out of Wethersfield pockets to help Hartford," Montinieri said.

Montinieri did speak of the need for a state and regional dialogue to help not only Hartford, but the other 168 cities and towns in Connecticut. He noted how important state aid is for the town's annual school budget as well as for the renovation and expansion of the high school.

Wethersfield's mayor also said there are other options to help the city out of its current financial crisis than for it to declare bankruptcy.

"City bankruptcy would negatively impact Wethersfield and its business community," Montinieri said. "I believe Hartford is coming back. Young adults are moving there."

An estimated 150 people were in attendance. Bronin opened his remarks by stating that one in four Wethersfield residents of working

age is employed somewhere in his city.

"A lot of folks in Wethersfield have roots in Hartford and our communities are still deeply tied together," he added.

Then he laid out the details of

## "More than half the property in the city is not taxable."

—Hartford Mayor Luke Bronin

the fiscal crisis that is \$50 million in the red now and will climb in coming years to \$75 million or more of red ink as refinanced debt service payments come due. He also explained how this happened.

"The foundation is broken. There is no question the city of Hartford has made mistakes in the past," Bronin said.

One of them was the decision to build Dunkin' Donuts stadium at the north end of downtown to lure the Rock Cats minor league baseball team away from New

Britain. He opposed that project from its inception and said it motivated him to run for office.

But he's stuck with it, so he is trying to make the best out of a difficult situation.

The stadium has been plagued

tractor to finish the job and correct less than satisfactory work.

The mayor said the city restructured its debt several years back in a dangerous manner and borrowed too much in general. Past mayors and City Councils also agreed to union contracts that the city does not have the money to support.

"Our capital city is in crisis. Our debt payment has tripled in the course of three years," he said.

Bronin placed much of the blame for Hartford's financial woes on the huge reliance every community in the state must place on the property tax. He contended this system works much better in suburban towns than it does in an urban environment.



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"It's our only real source of local revenue," he said. "More than half the property in the city is not taxable."

He said the city has a limited amount of land that it can tax and more tax-exempt state, college, hospital and other property than any other municipality. So the only recourse is to establish high mill rates. The mill rate in Hartford is 74, more than double that of Wethersfield.

"For our small businesses and mid-sized businesses, that's just a crushing burden," he said.

By state law, Hartford can only tax residential properties at 32 percent of their assessed value. Towns like Wethersfield are allowed to tax residential properties at 70 percent.

Bronin is convinced that the city cannot raise the tax rate any higher without severely negative consequences. He told the audience that city government cut \$20 million of spending last year in areas that suburban governments rarely touch such as Dial-A-Ride, senior

centers and libraries.

"We're fighting hard to get our labor costs down," he added.

He is pleased that city firefighters accepted a new contract that calls for lower wages while at the same time requiring union members to pay a greater share of their retirement and health care benefits.

He is also asking the colleges that inhabit the city to make voluntary financial contributions to Hartford's coffers. All of them are nonprofits. Young professionals are gobbling up newly developed residential housing in the downtown district, which gives him a sense of hope.

The number of people employed by the city has been reduced in recent years as well. Despite these steps, the red ink keeps growing. Bronin said city government realizes that it cannot simply tax or cut its way out of its dilemma.

He echoed Montinieri's comments that he did not come to town looking for money. But he did ask

for support at the state legislature and for people to encourage conversations at the state level to change certain things that would give Hartford and the state's other major cities, in his words, a fighting chance.

He added that a fiscally healthy Hartford is good not just for the city, but for the entire region because strong, vibrant urban centers all over the country are spurring economic growth.

"Employment growth everywhere in this country is happening in cities," he said.

Conversely, he argued that bankruptcy would have a powerful ripple effect on neighboring towns.

"Bankruptcy would be the wrong choice for us to make," Bronin said.

If the city is forced into bankruptcy it would negatively impact the state's ability to attract and retain business, for example.

"That's going to make General Electric moving to Boston look like a little pebble in the pond," he predicted.

One suggestion he made to fix the problem is for the state to share a small portion of its sales tax revenue with municipalities. Another is for it to fully fund the PILOT program.

Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) is a state program designed to give cities and towns at least a portion of the tax money they would receive from otherwise tax-exempt properties. The amount for each property is computed by a specific mathematical formula but the program has been under-funded by the legislature for years.

"If the state would fully fund its PILOT, that would almost get us through this crisis ... the state has not done that for a long, long time," Bronin said.

Another suggestion he made is to find a statewide solution that would make all cities and towns less dependent upon the property tax. He also sees an acute need to create jobs, noting the unemployment rate of Hartford residents is triple that of the surrounding towns.

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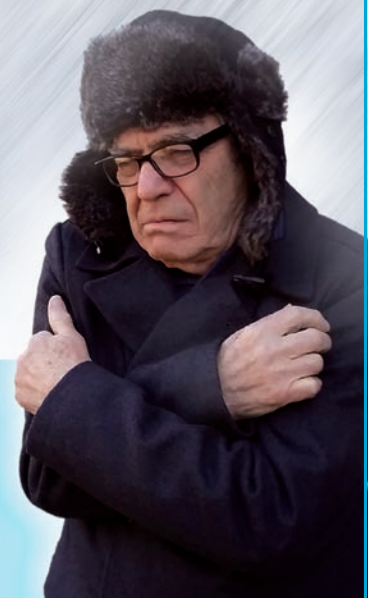
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Some neighborhoods, he added, have higher unemployment rates than they did during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

One of several residents who spoke suggested that one way to trim the city's budget is to reduce the size of the police department. Bronin disagreed.

"I actually think our current police force is too small," he said.

He added that the department has been trimmed from 500 officers to 380. An independent study recommended a staffing level of 480. Bronin said public safety is key to any revival efforts.

"You have no plan. You go hat in hand and beg," resident Paul Copp said.

He is the chairman of the locally based Independence Party. Others added to the criticism, with some claiming Hartford deserves bankruptcy. A few residents spoke in support of Bronin and offered to help.

Still others said it's the responsibility of state government, not the towns, to bail the city out of its crisis. Among those in the room were state Sen. Paul Doyle and state Reps. Antonio Guerrero and Russell Morin.

They did not speak, but at a Bronin appearance in Rocky Hill back on Dec. 12, Doyle and Guerrero said that the state is facing its own fiscal deficit of more than \$1 billion and they will probably not be able

to bring home the usual state aid for their district, let alone more money for Hartford.

"We made really tough decisions that treat taxpayers dollars like they matter," Bronin said. "The fact that the room is this full is an indication that this conversation matters."

Residents raised questions about the Metropolitan District and Hartford's alleged inability to pay for its share of water and sewer services provided to the eight member communities that include

ing communities because some residents would suffer extreme financial hardship.

"There are hundreds of [city of] Hartford retirees living here in Wethersfield and thousands in the region," he said.

The mayor spoke about shared services, but resident Dan O'Connor said that is not enough to solve the city's financial mess. Bronin responded that Connecticut residents are collectively frustrated with property taxes and the lack of economic growth.

me crazy is that we're a little state. We could fix it if we tried," she said.

Bronin agreed with his critics that city government should be held accountable for its fiscal situation and said he knows that any additional state aid he receives will come with strings attached. He will gladly accept as many strings as necessary in return for badly needed dollars.

"You're in this mess because of bad decisions," resident Tom Fitzpatrick said, adding that the reason Wethersfield and other towns are not in the same predicament is that they are more fiscally responsible.

Bronin pointed out that the city pension plan was funded at 103 percent prior to the 2007 economic recession. Many towns in this area do not fully fund their pension obligations, he added.

He also said many of the tax-exempt services that serve the entire region are located in the city. These include the MDC water treatment plant and Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority trash-to-energy facility in the city's South Meadows.

Another challenge is the level of poverty in the city and lack of wealth. The mayor cited statistics indicating that the medium income in Hartford is \$29,000 as compared to \$80,000 in Wethersfield.

"We lost most of our middle class a long time ago," he said. **WL**

## "You're in this mess because of bad decisions."

— Tom Fitzpatrick

Wethersfield. Bronin called those rumors false.

"We've haven't missed any payments," he said.

He explained that filing for municipal bankruptcy is different than filing for business or personal bankruptcy. It only allows a city or town to do three specific things:

- Reopen union contracts for negotiation.
- Reduce pensions.
- Decrease the debt owed to creditors.

He argued that bankruptcy would have a deleterious effect upon Wethersfield and its neighbor-

"There is no insulating Wethersfield from Hartford if it fails ... we're one integrated economic region," he said.

Another critic contended that all actions have consequences and Hartford must face up to its many mistakes. He also blamed decades of one-party rule by the Democrats; Hartford has not had a Republican mayor since Ann Uccello, who served from 1967-1971.

Barbara Ruhe, a local attorney and perennial Republican candidate for the legislature, laid blame for the problems on too much politics.

"One of the things that makes



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The Central Connecticut Health District recently celebrated its 20th anniversary. State Sen. Terry Gerratana, left, presents a state citation to, from left, Director of Health Charles K. Brown Jr. and CCHD board member Carolyn Wysocki, while state Rep. Gary Byron of Newington looks on.

Courtesy photo

## Making communities better

### Central Connecticut Health District celebrates 20th anniversary

by Mara Dresner  
Staff Writer

If you've ever eaten at a local restaurant, had your hair cut at a salon or gone for a swim at a public pool, you can thank the Central Connecticut Health District for helping ensure a safe experience.

CCHD recently celebrated its 20th anniversary. It was founded in 1996 when Rocky Hill and Wethersfield came together to form the Rocky Hill/Wethersfield Health District.

Berlin voted to join 1998, when the name was changed to the Central Connecticut Health District. Ten years after the original merger, Newington joined the district. Back in 1996, the health district served fewer than 52,000 residents. That number has grown more than 85 percent to approximately 97,000.

"The Central Connecticut Health District is committed to

improving the quality of life in our communities through prevention of disease and injury, fostering of a healthy environment, and promotion of the health of our residents. The health district was started to take advantage of combining resources to serve the needs of Rocky Hill and Wethersfield more efficiently," Director of Health Charles K. Brown Jr. said.

By working together, the towns could initially have the services of a full-time director of health, and sanitarians to provide environmental health services. This expanded over time to include community programs like health education, vaccinations and emergency preparedness planning.

The responsibilities of the CCHD are varied and include routine inspections of food service establishments, motels, septic systems, public swimming pools, day care centers, salons and private

**Making communities better** continued on page 15



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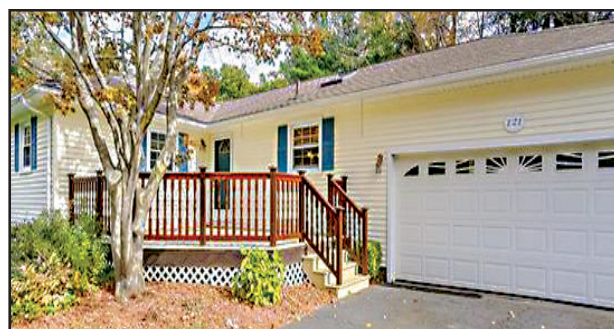
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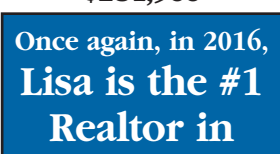
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## Making communities better *continued from 10*

wells. Staff also investigate property complaints and reported cases of childhood lead poisoning, as well as track and follow up on reports of communicable diseases.

CCHD also plans and implements a variety of programs including annual influenza and pneumonia immunization clinics, the Smiles for Life Senior Dental Program, the Putting on AIRS asthma prevention program, lead poisoning prevention and a Four-Town Walking Competition.

"I think that the practice of public health has changed over the years. In addition to the foundation of disease prevention efforts, evidence shows that the conditions that exist where you work and play also impacts the overall health of each of our residents," Brown said.

"Are there places to walk safely and get active in your neighborhood? Do you have access to healthy food? Is the place that you live safe and is



**Health Educator Lori DiPietro, left, and Ann Hartman, assistant director of community health of the Central Connecticut Health District, had information to go this past summer at the Rocky Hill free concert series**

your community engaged in their health and well-being?

"We call these things the social determinants of health and public health agencies are increasingly working with community partners to address these conditions to make the biggest impact in the long-term

health status of all our residents," he added.

He leads a staff of eight full-time and three part-time employees. There's also a 13-member Board of Health. Programs are funded through a combination of state and local governments, grants from state

and federal agencies, and fees from licenses and services.

"Public health is all about prevention and the Central Connecticut Health District is proud to have served our communities for 20 years in this role," Brown said.

"I think that our vaccination

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Charles K. Brown Jr., director of the Central Connecticut Health District, believes public health is all about prevention.

program has been very successful over the years. During the H1N1 pandemic, CCHD staff and volunteers vaccinated 6,335 people against the flu virus. We get great support from the community and our outstanding corps of volunteers that make sure that our communities are protected," he added.

"I am also extremely proud of our environmental health staff who work every single day to ensure the health of the communities we serve. You probably never see them in action, but they work tirelessly to make sure that food-borne outbreaks don't have a chance to make headlines by inspecting restaurants and educating food service workers on proper food handling to prevent disease."

The efforts of CCHD reach thousands of area residents.

"We generally provide around 2,500 flu shots every year during our mass vaccination clinics. Our environmental health staff conducted 1,478 food service inspections last year, 179 salon inspections, and responded to numerous housing and environmental complaints," Brown said.

"Our Putting on AIRS asthma program conducted 72 home visits around our region to help children suffering from asthma improve the management of their condition. We licensed 528 food service establishments in the four towns we serve last year."

Judy Sartucci of Rocky Hill was appointed by her town to serve on the board in December 2007 and now is the district's chairman. But she has been involved in public health for much longer than that. She retired in 2003 and previously worked for the state Department of Public Health, among other positions.

One of her roles was to work with health districts and she was involved when Rocky Hill and Wethersfield first considered joining forces. She said the regional organization offers benefits to the towns.

"It brings a nice structure for addressing public health concerns in the community and providing public health services. What we found with public health districts and regional health departments versus individual town or city health departments is

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very often they're able to provide a little bit more and better public health services than any of those smaller towns are able to provide on their own," she said.

For example, an individual town might only have one sanitarian. With the regional system, there's always someone available for backup if that person is on vacation or away for training.

"Another example is being able to do good health planning for the towns as a group," she added.

Sartucci has noticed an increase in programs that help improve quality of life, such as fall prevention for senior citizens, safe driving for both seniors and teenage drivers, and nutrition.

"A lot of what we're doing is in the background in terms of trying to prevent disease and trying to be healthy. We're not doing this entirely on our own. We may spark an idea to get things going, then the director of health and his staff will pull people together and work with them," she said.

"We look a lot on the preventative side of things, better nutrition, improving exercise. We look for

opportunities to improve health and take charge of decisions about health. Public health has been involved for a long time, with the tobacco control piece going back several decades.

"It's one of three main areas we've gone after. We've found if we can work with people in terms of improving nutrition, getting food

## "CCHD works hard every day to make our communities healthier."

—Charles K. Brown Jr.

they need and better food choices, keeping their weight down, exercising, not smoking or using tobacco products or stopping if they are using, in the long run, it helps them be healthier and it helps bring down health care costs in this country."

She said health information is a major component of public health.

"With the arrival of the Internet and social media, in some ways it's better in terms of information and

it's sometimes confusing. Providing health information is another big area we're involved in," she said.

"Emergency preparedness is another new area. Even in the '90s, the government was already putting money in and starting to look at emergency preparedness planning. Certainly since 9/11 that's grown tremendously."

She expects that the health

education aspect of the department will continue to evolve.

"It's constantly changing. That's one thing that's really challenging about public health," she said. "The health district is there to help prevent disease, the health district is there to respond when the community needs us, and the health district is there to help people make [better] choices about their health."

Brown said CCHD has expanded

its offerings through the years.

"Over the last 20 years, the basic focus of this agency has been on disease prevention and that has not changed. The environmental health services that we provide through our enforcement of the public health code are foundational and serve to protect our residents from food and water-borne diseases," he said.

"Our vaccination program helps to provide enough immunity within the community to protect everyone against infectious diseases like influenza and pneumonia. Now we are trying to engage the communities in healthy behaviors by promoting walking and eating healthier to prevent and address chronic diseases like obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease," Brown added.

"CCHD works hard every day to make our communities healthier. The work we do to prevent disease, promote healthy behaviors and protect against health threats sometimes goes unnoticed, but the end result is happier, healthier communities. That's why we do what we do." **WL**

*Learn more at [ccthd.org](http://ccthd.org).*



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# February *calendar*

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

**2 Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours**, 5-7 p.m., Eleanor Buck Wolf Nature Center, 156 Prospect St., 860-721-6200 or wethersfield-chamber.com

**5 SOUPer Bowl Party**, 5 p.m., CenterPoint Community Church, 840 Silas Deane Highway, 860-571-8415

**6 Microsoft Word Basics**, 6:30 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

**7 Teens Cake Decorating Workshop**, 3:15 p.m., for grades 7-12, registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

**Breaking Bread: Is Gluten Free for You?**, 6:30 p.m., registration

required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

**Time to Talk**, 7:30 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org, also Feb. 14, 21 and 28

**11 Saturday Cinema: "Sergeant Rutledge,"** 1:30 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

**Keeney Cultural Series**, 7 p.m., Keeney Memorial Cultural Center, 200 Main St., \$10 for historical society members and \$12 for others, 860-529-7656 or visit wethersfieldhistory.org

**150 Prospect Coffeehouse**, 6:30 p.m., Wethersfield United Methodist Church, 150 Prospect St., 860-614-5158 or tanjam@com-cast.net

**12 UNICO Famous Macaroni Dinner**, 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield St., \$12 for adults and \$7 for children, 860-563-3103 or johnconsole@sbcglobal.net

**13 Microsoft Word Intermediate**, 6:30 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

**18 Make Chocolate Bark Bars**, 2 p.m., registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

**Fireworks Blast**, 7 p.m., Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield St., \$35 per person, 860-306-1235, 860-214-4851 or wethersfield@sbcglobal.net

**28 GFWC Newington/Wethersfield Woman's Club**, 6:30 p.m., Jefferson House, 1 John

H. Stewart Drive, Newington, 860-310-7015

**21 Teen Matinee**, 2:30 p.m., for grades 7-12, registration required, Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

**27 Digital Scrapbooking**, 6:30 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

**28 Library Board**, 7 p.m., Wethersfield Library, 515 Silas Deane Highway, 860-257-2811 or wethersfieldlibrary.org

*Is your club, community organization, school or house of worship holding an event open to the general public? If so, please send us the details for inclusion in our calendar. Email your events to Mark Jahne at mjahne@turleyct.com or mail them to Turley CT Community Publications, 540 Hopmeadow St., Simsbury, CT 06070.*

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# Following her bliss

Wethersfield native dances her way through life

by Allie Rivera  
Staff Writer

**M**any people like dance. Few people live it. Kayla Rodriguez is following her passion by working as a professional dancer and dance teacher, despite the long hours and physical exertion it requires.

"My life is crazy," Rodriguez said with a laugh.

A Wethersfield native, she has been dancing for more than 20 years, beginning with one ballet class per week at Dance 10 Studios in town

as a child.

"As years went on, I started adding classes," she said. "I started with ballet, then jazz, tap, lyrical, pointe, hip hop, the Wethersfield dance team, contemporary and modern. So basically everything."

At the time, Rodriguez didn't consider dancing to be an active part of her future, instead viewing her numerous classes as an enjoyable interest.

"I actually didn't know I really wanted to pursue it until I was a second

semester senior in high school," she said.

"We had a guest teacher come to one of my classes and something clicked in me that this was something that is more than a hobby."

After graduating from Wethersfield High School, she began attending Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I., with a newfound commitment to her art.

"I auditioned for the dance program my first week there,"



Wethersfield native Kayla Rodriguez teaches a beginning ballet class for ages 4-5 at Dance 10 Studios.

Photo by Lisa Brisson

## Wethersfield Public Schools Register now for Kindergarten Fall 2017!

Any child 5 years old on or before January 1, 2018 is eligible for Kindergarten for the school year 2017-2018

Registration materials will be available on-line after February 1st under the "Parents and students/student registration" tab of the Wethersfield Public Schools website:  
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Highest	95 Highest Road	Maresa Harvey	860-571-8380
Samuel B. Webb	51 Willow Street	Michael Verderame	860-571-8340
Charles Wright	186 Nott Street	Glenn Horter	860-571-8350

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she said.

Rodriguez used this time to further study another passion – psychology. She discovered that both of her interests were interconnected in ways she had not previously realized.

“They really connect in many ways, if you think about the mind-body connection and just the whole body awareness,” she said. “So I was able to double major in psych and dance, which is exactly what I needed.”

After graduation, she made the decision that she wanted to continue to pursue dance as a profession, be it through performing or teaching. Knowing that she would not like living in a large city like New York or Chicago, she returned to town and began searching for opportunities.

She found out about a dance company in Northern Massachusetts and, after attending its auditions, was selected for the company.

“Coming out of college with a dance degree I was like, you are doing this,” she recalled. “I was driving two hours every weekend for rehearsals and people would say,

‘why are you doing this?’ And I was like, I can’t not.

“I couldn’t just quit after college, because the second you quit dancing, you limit yourself,” she added.

After gaining experience there, Rodriguez, who now lives in Manchester, decided to start looking for more opportunities closer to home.

“I didn’t know about the dance world in Connecticut,” she said. “Once I got into it, though, all these opportunities came up.”

She learned about the Hartford-based Sonia Plumb Dance Company and was immediately interested. She began there as an apprentice and worked her way up to full company member roughly six months later.

In addition to regularly rehearsing and performing, becoming a company dancer with Sonia Plumb

gave her the means to create the opportunities she wanted to experience. Along with her interest in psychology, she has always enjoyed working with students with special needs.

“After college, I was working

with the Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress, teaching one dance class a month,” she said.

Rodriguez found that she had a knack for and enjoyment of teaching students of all ages with special needs and started to seek out more

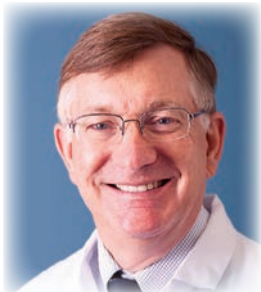


Kayla Rodriguez also performs with the Sonja Plumb Dance Company in Hartford.

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opportunities to do so.

"I've always had a really good connection with people with special needs. There's something about the different intelligences in different places," she said. "Dancing is a way to communicate and I like being able to give them a way to communicate that's not so hard on them."

With the help of Sonia Plumb, Rodriguez has worked to create a program called Active Bodies, Active Brains, a dance class for children with autism.

"We started with one kid and did eight weeks," she said. "Now we have two separate classes, a kids' class with six and a teen class of eight."

For many of the students, the class is as much about learning to dance as it is about building social skills, self-esteem and gross motor abilities.

"I love seeing the joy that's in them. You can feel that self-esteem from the movement," Rodriguez said.

female students who may feel pressure to look a certain way.

"The good thing about modern [style dance] is that as long as you can move your body, you're good. It's best when you feel at ease and at peace with what you have," she said.

"I think your job as a teacher is to translate that message, because so often in this field it's about the body.

"It's actually teaching them about how the body works so they aren't just going through the motions. It's not just about dance. There's a lot about respect, trusting yourself, self-esteem and pushing yourself to do more."

Now in her fourth year of teaching, she finds joy in all of the ages she teaches.

"I love the energy the little ones have. They haven't lost that innate ability to move," she said. "But at the same time, with teenagers you can do more with them. You can expect more and

**"You can tell that you've made an impact on their life and that's such a good feeling."**

**-Kayla Rodriguez**

"They're all different, but there they are in a comfortable zone with a person who is patient with them."

Seeing the joy in their faces during and after class is why she loves teaching this program.

"Every time I leave that class, I'm smiling from ear to ear," she said. "You can tell that you've made an impact on their life and that's such a good feeling."

Hoping to improve her teaching abilities in this field, Rodriguez returned to school a few weeks ago to study occupational therapy at Manchester Community College.

"I like learning and I like finding out how I can do more," she said. "I think it's going to make me more confident in my teaching."

Rodriguez will continue teaching dance both with Sonia Plumb as well as at the Pitkin Community Center, Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts, and Dance 10.

"I never thought I'd want to teach dance, but I've fallen in love with it," she said.

In all of the classes she teaches, which range from preschool children to adults, she feels it is important to teach about more than just the art of dancing, especially to her young

do more complicated movements."

While she loves teaching, her true passion lies on the stage.

"Performing is my love," she said. "It's where I belong and where I feel my most happy state."

Through the Sonia Plumb Dance Company, Rodriguez has had the opportunity to perform throughout the state and New England, most recently at the Bushnell in Hartford and the Katharine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center in Old Saybrook.

"We try to do as many as we can," she said. "I think of every performance as another chance to dance."

She hopes to continue dancing in whatever capacity possible. Her dream is to become a choreographer and possibly start her own dance company someday.

At this point in her career, Rodriguez is happy to be able to say she is truly doing what she loves, and while her schedule may get hectic, she would not change a single thing.

"I've really had to push and not accept 'no.' A lot of dancers quit. They move to New York, they get a waitressing job, they don't get the dance jobs and then they leave," she said.

"It's cool to look back and be like, oh, I'm doing it." **WL**



# LIFE in the classroom

Youth Advisory Board looks for ways to connect and support children and teenagers

by Mark Jahne  
Editor

**T**here are organizations in town designed to support and engage senior citizens and little children, among others. One of the less-known groups is designed to focus on adolescents and teenagers.

The Youth Advisory Board consists of adults from various town agencies and organizations as well as student representatives from the middle and high schools. It looks to provide them with fun activities, help resolve issues related to the younger population, and encourage them to get involved in community service at an early age.

This board meets on the first Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at town hall. It is currently chaired by Cindy Clancy, a local resident and special assistant public defender for juvenile matters at Rockville Superior Court, and Rachel Bahouth, a senior at Wethersfield High School.

Other leaders include Eric Knapp, the police department's school resource officer at WHS, and Erica Teixeira, the town's assistant director of social and youth services.

"It's been around for a long

time," Teixeira said. "In the past two years we have really gotten active and involved in a lot more initiatives."

"There are so many people from different areas of town that come together" for this group, Knapp said.

They include town government, the police, Wethersfield Public Schools, Richard M. Keane Foundation and more. Rachel said Knapp approached her when she was a sophomore and invited her to join the YAB.

"I went to my first meeting and loved it. I wanted to get involved because I think it's so important. I've had a fantastic childhood living here," she said.

"A lot of people don't know about the board," she added.

In addition to her academics, she is an all-conference diver on the school's swimming team and captain of its golf team. Outside of school, Rachel volunteers at Mercy Shelter in Hartford, lives her faith as an altar server at the Church of the Incarnation, plays the cello and has a job waiting on tables at Town Line Diner.

She hopes to study biology in college and then enroll in a pre-



The Youth Advisory Board is led by, in part, Police Officer Eric Knapp, WHS senior Rachel Bahouth and Erica Teixeira, assistant director of social and youth services for the town

Photo by Mark Jahne

medical program.

"I like being involved in clubs and things like that," she said.

The YAB is working in conjunction with the town's Hunger Action Team in support of Foodshare and feeding the hungry. The trio said they want teenagers to become involved in more town-wide activities.

One of those initiatives is a twice-weekly supervised Friday Night Hangout program at the Pitkin Community Center. One of the nights is set aside for sixth-graders and the other is for students in grades 7-8.

"The biggest thing is to

recognize volunteers at all levels of youth," Knapp said.

A special night is held at the community center every year to do just that. Those nominated for these awards must volunteer for a certain number of hours to qualify; the numbers are different, depending upon age and category.

"We want to promote giving back to the community at a very young age. My department relies heavily upon volunteers," Teixeira said.

As one example, she said many youngsters assisted with the town's annual Thanksgiving basket distribution. **WL**

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Audrey Mainville, Elizabeth Malicki, William Malizia, Joseph Meredith, Chase Miller, Summer Mitchell, Meaghan Murphy, Clarissa Nock, Connor Pace, Katerina Pantaleo, Cameron Partridge, Hemil Patel, Mya Pellegrino, Trevor Piecewicz, Luciano Quagliaroli, Emma Rakus, Abigail Riberio, John Rumley, Eric Scheuermann, Amina Shakeel, Matthew Silver, Tanner Slesinski, Connor Stahl, Lauren Strong, Samantha Strong, Hannah Sullivan, Rebecca Sullivan, Zane Tinker, Kelsey Tranberg, Nicholas Ursini, Kassandra Vazquez-Felipe, Christine Vittner-Ouellette, Olivia Washington and Grace Ann Weaver.

### Grade 9 Honors

Arden Adamo, Basel Altows, Alexander Amado, Zachary Amado, Kyle Anderson, Bryce Arnold, Nicholas Babineau, Owen Barnett, Sarah Bello, Francesco Birritta, Alexander Bobin, Max Bongiovanni, Dominic Bosco, Waverly Brown, Brandon Bukowski, Justin Burchell, Alexander Buyak, Joseph Buysse, Riley Carlson, Sarah Carmel, Joseph Cassineri, Citlalli Chavez-Aguilar, Joseph Coleman, Tiffany Cope, Isabella Costa, Eric Denz, Andrew

Desrochers, Fiona Dinneen, Sean Donahue, Jessica Driscoll, Kyle Edman, Michael Fanelli, Emily Fazzina, Brianna Garcia, Samuel Garcia, Kathleen Gilland, Emmett Gionfriddo, Gabriel Gomes, Julian Gonzalez, Rachel Gopaul, Jillian Gray, Zachary Grenier, Michelle Guerard, Nicole Gwynn, Jordan Hickey, Hailey Hodsen, Jade Iaco, Alexa Indomenico, Michael Irace, Daniel Jimenez, Dylan Kallicharan, Emily Karwic, Ellie Kieselback, Caroline Klinger, Aung Ko, Rei Koni, Frederick Krol, Elizabeth Laczewski, Brittney Lanne, Mary LeConche, Abigail Lemaire, Lauren Lesser, Nathan Loura, Abigail Malizia, Michael Malizia, Yulduz Mamedova, Kyle Martinez, Taylor McGeachy, Evan McNeice, Paige Melillo, Meaghan Merchant, Ava Minichino, Kieran Moller, Olivia Morais, Caitlin Nardella, Tam Nguyen, Nicole Nocida, Kerianne O'Brien, Samuel Odell, Morgan O'Donnell, John Orsini, Maria Pena, Serf Piedrasanta, William Pilkington, Camila Porras, Ryan Prado, Atif Raza, Isabella Rende, Isaac Rios, Ryan Salemi, Isabella Samse, Taylor Sapere, Reece Skelly, Abigail Slemmer, Kevin Torres, Antonia Vardal, Zaira Vasconcelos, Dylan Vega, Xiomara Villacorta, Carsyn Viner, Jake Whitaker,

Tyler Wolf and Mark Zocco.

### Grade 10 High Honors

Aiden Ademi, Ajla Ahmetovic, Dino Alihodzic, Hope Allen, Justin Biraci, Alec Capasso, Natalie Casertano, Danielle Colbath, Cameron Corazzo, Kayla Cruz, Tyler DellaFera, Thomas Drake, Brianna Dreger, Cameron Elliott, Annisa Ferguson, Auna Foster, Eden Aguiar, Sarah Gordon, Riley Grenier, Anthony Guerrero, Rachel Hall, Jeremy Halla, Shannon Hattie, Tai Huynh, Luke Johnson, Madeline Johnson, Jared Kauffman, Gabrielle Klementon, Anthony Ky, Ricardo Lima, Leah Lin, Brendon Mansaku, Lauren McAlister, Emily McKenna, Anthony Milluzzo, Kenan Mujic, Nicole Murphy, Sydney Ouellette, Madison Patkoske, Alyssa Pearce, Erin Robles, Ryan Rodrigues, Jenna Sanzo, Jason Scalora, Masala Solinis, Katherine Stearley, Kaitlyn Swoverland, Mia Tougas, Micaela Uccello, Elizabeth Veilleux, Connor Wallowitz, Owen Weaver, Haley, Whelchel and Christina Yanaros.

### Grade 10 Honors

Matthew Accarpio, Zoe Adams, Jordan

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# EDUCATION

Adduci, Grace Amoruso, Chase Anderson-Birdsall, Ashley Anduha, Allison Appel, Alec Arnold, Kate Ayers, Mark Bagdasarian, Jack Blaisdell, Monica Bongiovanni, Dante Burgos, Joshua Chamberland, Madison Cipolla, Kacia Claffey-Hesseltine, Marissa Colangelo-Deluca, David Colon, Jenna Colon, John Cravero, Austin DellaFera, Olivia Destefani, Cenia Diluvio, Afton Dyjak, James Errickson, Valentino Fazio, Abigail Francis, Kathryn Galusha, David Garcia, Katherine Ginter, Amayia Giscombe, Jordan Griffin, Lucyne Grigorian, Kailey Guancha, Zeeshan Haider, Liam Harrington, Nicholas Hetherman, Holden Hoon, Matthew Iallonardo, Luca Isaila, Alexander Jones, Kylie Judson, Anna Kallajian, Brian Kanya, Arber Karamanaj, Ivan Kaurin, Luke Kelleher, Kavi Khadar, Agron Konjusha, Brooke Kycia, Nathan Labbe, Cassandra Landry, Matthew Laurie, Yasmin Lazu, Jacob Lepore, Tatum Lewis-Holcombe, Gavin Lippitt, Emily Litke, Gabriella Lomonico, Cheyenne Lueken, Joshua Malizia, Michael Manousos, Calista Margiotta, Patrick Martin, Tanya Messenger, Logan Miller, Melisa Mirzayev, Gaura Mishra, Emma Moore, Jacqueline Moquin, Lejla Muskic, Erin Nargi, Dylan Olesen, Morgan Pacheco, Rebecca Papoosha, Daniel Parker, Sasha Parmanand, Jake Peckrul, Rowan Pelletier, Kelvyn Perez, Marina Pernoï, Chit Po, Dorian Prevalla, Emily Raffalo, Kevin Rascius, Nicholas Riccio, Jorjanna Rivera, Raul Rodriguez, Isabella Scandura, John Schiavone, Jacob Schlapfer, Dimitri Shaposhnikov, Caleb Skowronek, Jaedyn Stanescki, Aidan Stec, Alexis Szymecki, Shantall Teran, Liam Tilton, John Tine, Rachel Vasel, Samuel Veilleux, Angelica Velez, Mei Xue, Sophia Zagaja, Erion Zeka and Ryan Zwick.

## Grade 11 High Honors

David Adams, Matthew Amoddio, Rachael Amoruso, Nicholas Arcata, Shawn Bertucio, Alexander Bielak, Ashley

Bilello, AnnaJane Brown, Kendall Cathcart, Ling Chi, Isabel Correa, Jessica Darby, Stephanie DeCarli, Hannah Delvecchio, Thomas Dowd, Ismael Garcia, Jessica Garofalo, Lily Gaunt, Amanda Gilbert, Alessandro Gulino, Brian Heavren, Jonathan Hopkins, Nathan Hrdy, Camden Johnson, Samantha Johnson, Alexis Kallicharan, Conor Keane, Caroline Kennedy, Devon Kleeblatt, Irene Laramie, Katia Malinguaggio, Juliana Mandile, Malena Mandile, Heather Mayo, Maria Moldovan, Marlena Monroe, William Odell, Anna O’Neil, Sara Puglielli, Olivia Purinton, Karen Rodriguez, Juliana Rosa, Jane Rumley, Brianna Santilli, Kaitlyn Sargis, Rachel Sargis, Isabella Schroeder, Brenna Shannahan, Tessa Slesinski, Tyler Stout, Abigail Sullivan, Alexandra Talarczyk, Alex Tawrel, Nicole Teti, Amanda Tougas, Garrett Tougas, Triniti White, Rachel Wilson, Karolina Wlaz and Emma Zaleski.

## Grade 11 Honors

Lexarie Acosta, Mauro Alamo, Ahmed Alihodzic, Grant Anderson, Arianna Antonakos, Madelyn Barone, Brendan Barry, Almira Beganovic, Sabrina Berry, Safiye Boluk, Zachary Bonfiglio, Austin Bovino, Eric Bucknam, Rachel Bugella, Rebecca Buonopane, Abigail Caulfield, Benjamin Cholewa, Julia Chrostowski, Liam Collins, Joshua Cronkhite, Justin Cruz, Lindsey Davoren, Odalys DeJesus, Joseph DiCioccio, Maria DiMattia, Alexandra Dizes, Brendan Dowd, McKayla Dreger, Jacob Driscoll, Jalyssa Dunham, Fatija Duric, Jordenn Edwards, Destiny Egnew, Danielle Elliott, Julianna Fanelli, Adnan Fejzic, Julia Feliciano, Derrick Fields, Alison Fitzpatrick, Blake Fulton, Michael Gionfriddo, Tyler Gomes, Victoria Goodman, Aldin Handzic, Kenneth Harrison, Tatiana Henry, Brennan Hurley, Gabriela Interian, Christian Karkos, Katrina Kurpaska, Julie Lamore, Lily Langdon, Elena Lapa, Ezekiel Latiff, Samuel Lemaire, Mitchell Llorens,

Caroline Logan, David Lopez, Henry Lopez, Julia McNally, Mariah Merchant, James Miller, Michael Mozzicato, Maya Mulholland, Lexi Munger, Emma Murray, Kaitlyn O’Brien, James O’Connor, Filip Ogniewski, Rahman Osmanovic, Andrew Pace, Molly Partridge, Jack Patrizzo, Micaela Pereyra, Chelsea Pinchera, Jessica Pratt, Evan Presta, Erin Reardon, Jacqueline Reategui, Samuel Reichelt, Emma Rocheleau, Mirnes Sabanovic, Luke Saharek, Jacqueline Samse, Ryan Sanzo, Cassandra Scalora, Joseph Scheuermann, Jason Sharp, Taylor Simeone, Ryan Skelly, Nathaniel Sommers, Will Stabach, Michael Stefano, Maura Stewart, George Stoughton, James Sullivan, Kaleigh Sullivan, Victoria Swanson, Abigail Sywenkyj, Addison Toner, Megan Tonucci, Eric Torres, Kassandra Torres, Lucas Torres, Chloe Troy, Victoria Tucker, Caden Turcotte, Vanessa Valle, Haley Weinberg and Victoria Whitaker.

## Grade 12 High Honors

Kady Allen, Stephanie Ayers, Rachel Bahouth, Lily Bello, Anthony Berry, Taylor Bradley, Jeana Bruno, Ashley Burkell, Chianna Calafiore, Anna Cannata, Vanessa Carbone, Laura Clark, Caroline Coyne, Megan Darrell, Avishek Das, JinTao Feng, Kyle Flynn, Dorris Gallari, Lindsey Gordon, Collin Grottke, Lauren Hubschmitt, Abigail Hulk, Idalis Irizarry, Matthew Jablonka, Matthew Keefe-Stefanik, Kathleen Kerekes, Kelly Lamo, Lynne Landers, Jordan Laske, Jeremy Levesque, Kerry Lindquist, Aleah Livingston, Ian Luna, Gabriella Margiotta, Justin Michaud, Amiel Monasterial, Emma Peak, Connor Peterson, Brianna Platania, Madeline Raffalo, Madison Raposo, Jessica Roberts, Samantha Rosa, Christopher Santos, Andrew Sanzaro, Alyssa Schroll, Nora Serrao, Eric Shields, Gabriela Silva, Aidan Sitler, Jessica Sitler, Jacklyn Snide, Sarah Stegman, David Szymanowski, Sabrina Torres, Sara

Trueax, Sarina Tucker, Samantha Urban, Christian Venditti, Shaelyn Way, Jocelyn Wilcox and Yiqian Zhuo.

## Grade 12 Honors

Michael Alessandra, Nicole Arcari, Daziyah Armstrong, Holly Babineau, Sarah Bean, Victoria Brazel, Jeffrey Bridges, Andre Brown, Melanie Burns, Yesenia Caceres, Mariana Carcia, Joseph Carilli, Isabella Casale, Devyn Clark, Jacob Colbath, Audrey Coleman, Andrew Console, Nicole Cornelio, Destiny Cruz, Dylan DellaFera, Hannah Desrochers, Molly Desrochers, Jason Dignoti, Dina DiMarco, Vanessa Faienza, Breanna Flores, Enrique Flores, Maeve Foley, Zachary Forrest, Christian Gilly, Emilie Gray, Kaleigh Hart, Bridget Hattie, Kaitlyn Irace, David Jensen, Joel Jimenez, Emily Kallajian, Stephanie Kallicharan, Alexander Kauffman, Maggie Krawczyk, Amina Kuljancic, Kevin Landrigan, Marissa Landry, Timothy Laurito, Megan Lauzon, Sarah Lawler, William Maciolek, Erica MacLean, Katherine McDonald, Olivia McGrath, Morgan McMahon, Matthew Michaud, Benjamin Milano, Emma Moller, Christopher Montalvo, Ashley Morrell, Michael Murphy, Allison Nargi, Aidan Nelson, Jenalee Noyes, Elvira Osmanovic, Angel Pagan, Kate Parker, Andrey Patinha, Stevenson Paul, Hannah Pearce, Isabella Petrella, Tyler Piecewicz, Braden Plant, Christian Prado, Zana Preniqi, Briana Rodriguez, Oscar Romero, Eldin Salihovic, Michael Santiago, Ray Santiago, Joyce Santos, Steven Santos, Evan Setzko, Hsa Shee, Naomi Shiff, Trisha Signorello, Richard Sipala, Patrick Skelly, Peter Skowronek, Angela Sollima, Austin Stefano, Kendell Sullivan, Lukas Szymecki, Roshanay Tahir, Morgan Tanguay, Bianca Tata, Casey Urso, Adam Veilleux, Ricardo Velez, Payton Viner, Emily Wadsworth, Brian Weed, Arben Zoto Madison Zuerblis and Jillian Zuidema. **WL**

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## EDUCATION

# Corpus Christi honors top students

**The following students were named to the honor roll in grades 6-8 at Corpus Christi School.**

## Grade 8

Elizabeth Adams, Alessandro Altavilla, Katherine Antico, Emily Bielawiec, Olivia Butler, Elena Cahill, Grace DeVito, Christopher DiBella, Max Gardner, Julia Gardow, Jack Hemenway, Luke Holyfield, Sarah Karwic, Nadab Khan, Caitlyn Kownacki, Luke

Lappe, Colton Malloy, Claire Murphy (high honors), Robert Onyina, Elisia Pagliuca, Reid Paiva (high honors), Hank Penders, Lauren Pickering, Dominic Rossetti, Margaret Sadak, Anthony Satrohan (high honors), Brian Satrohan (high honors), Eduardo Serrano (high honors), Connor Silbo, Luke Strole, Lauren Trymbulak, Dana Vatafu (high honors) and Brendan Zawisa (high honors).

## Grade 7

Grace Andrea, Niko Anastasiades, Deven Austin, MaryClare Bello, Lilly Brown (high honors), Madilyn Carbone, Benjamin Carso (high honors), Andrew Cataldi, Eamon Conneely, Michael DelMonaco, Calle Dennis, Adriana Diaz, Bridget Eberhart, Dillon Gallo, Nudrat Khan, Arielena Lang (high honors), Regina Miller, Paula Opena (high honors), Elizabeth Orchen-Baker (high honors), Caroline Peak, Emilia St. Pierre

(high honors), Alison Wagner and Mathieu Zazzaro.

## Grade 6

Shannon Arsenault, Nicholas Carvalho, Gabriel Chavez, Jade Colon, Graciella Davis (high honors), Sean DeVito, William Epright, Jacob Greco, Kristin Koka, Matthew Lam, Shannon McNally, Catherine Murphy (high honors), John Orchen-Baker, Brendan Peary, Isabella Stevens and Allen Vidallon (high honors). **WL**



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## EDUCATION

# Middle school honors its top students

**The following students were named to the honor roll for the first trimester at Silas Deane Middle School.**

### Grade 7 General Honors

Alani Adams, Medina Ahmetovic, Aliza Aijaz, Mazen Altows, Olivia Amodeo, Louisa Amoroso-Whittles, Brooke Arnold, Benjamin Baby, Mackenzi Banet, Naveen Bangalore, Olivia Barnett, Bruna Barros, James Bellas, Kathryn Bello, Gabrielle Berasi, Arbi Berisha, Brian Bianchi, Cindy Biraci, Luka Bushi, Emma Cabral, Paolo Cianci, Heleina Cicero, Adriana Cruz, Abigail D'Agnesse, Riley D'Amato, Olivia Dizes, Megan Doshi, Ava Dyjak, Krystal Engel, Jake Errickson, Chastity Ettienne, Michael Ferris, Fallon Flynn, Riley Ford, Jack Freitas, Christian Friedman-Ringwood, Daniela Generis, Joseph Giaratana, Jeremy Gilbert, Zachary Goodin, Jaden Goodsell, Alexa Grenier, Josh Gstell, Sarah Gurskis, Irma Guster, Kathleen Hattie, Jack Hedstrom, Cole

Heinzmann, Adele Hong, Emmeline Hong, Valerie Huaqui, Kayley Jordan, Kareena Khadar, Jack Kulpa, Maxfield Langdon, Michael LaPerriere, Mindy Le, Kade Lippitt, Grace Lisella, Lola Lombardo, Olivia Lonski, John Lynch, Ethan Malloy, Zoe Martin, Shane Mazur, William McCarter, Andrew McDonough, Emily McGuire, Emily Messina, Emily Miller, Henry Misseri, William Monroe, Cooper Moreau, Sheila Muskic, Nickolas Nasse, Ava O'Neil, Lillian O'Neil, Colin Pace, John Pedraza, Konstantina Petropoulos, Sophia Pirrotta, Mia Popowycz, Anthony Pretter, Riana Prevalla, Tatum Radacsi, Amisha Ramnarace, Barry Ren, Maren Riley, Paulina Rivera, Tianna Rivera, Ziah Robinson-Thibdeau, Nyasia Rodriguez, Yanitza Rodriguez, Leonard Rozario, Jacqueline Rushiti, Taylor Sackett, Cruz Santa, Isaac Santiago, Izaiah Santiago, Amalia Santos, Gabriela Santos, Tomas Santos, Emily Sardo, Joseph Segreto, Charlotte Seitzinger, Sarah Seymour, Brianna Shamo, Fiona Sisson,

Emily Sousa, Meghan Sousa, Holden Speed, Andrew St, Nathan Stabach, Ethan Stearley, Liam Stec, Nicole Strickland, Jack Susca, Anissa Tapia, KarLeigh Tinker, Ethan Torres, Megan Tranberg, Amar Velic, Kenny Vu, Leah Weston, Julia Wilson, Dylan Wolf, George Zack and Anisa Zoto.

### Grade 7 High Honors

Ella Alger, Naida

Alihodzic, Joseph Bellas, Jessica Bianchi, Aisling Bourbeau, Molly Bowers, Andrea Buzas, Martina Carbone, Jaime Condon, Alanna DePinto, Minh Dinh, Sean Dunn, Liliana Garcia, Roshini Gopaul, Samuel Gustafson, Ava Heimgartner, Emma Hucks, Alexander Jara, Samuel Johnson, Abigail King, Rita Konjusha, Logan Lisella, Emily MacDonald, Taylor Moran, Andrea Moyano, Alexander Murphy, Vivian Nguyen, Evan Partridge, Caroline Provost, Madyson Ramsey, Elizabeth Silver, Claire Sipes, Sophia Sywenkyj and Lena Uccello.

### Grade 8 General Honors

Cameryn Wilkinson, Taylor Adduci, Thomas Aglieco, Jahna Agolli, Adelyne Andino, Crystalee Arroyo, Michaela Ashley, Ali Assi, Kevin Avery, Joseph Balut, Camille Barone, Nadia Baroni, Kyle Beasley, Enea Beda, Asmita Bhattarai, Ava Bielenda, Lynn Blot, Michael Bobin, Isabella Bonvisuto, Jacob Bradley, Sydney Budaj, Juliana Buonopane, Stephen Byczko, Anthony Carbo, Lucas Cardoso, Lilliana Cartiera, Morgan Cathcart, Erica Christie, Grace Cipolla, Eamon Coggins, James Darby, Richard Darrell, Mia Destefani, Sarah Detrick, Mehmedina Duric, Matthew Fletcher, Owen Gagne, Gianna Garro, Haylie Gomez, Charles Gray, Meghan Gregorski, Aaron Guay, Gabriella Gulino, Lejla Guster, Anna Hart, John Hart, Noah Haskins, Erica Hertle, Tiago Huynh, Rian Jackson, Sierra Judson, Madison King, Nathan Kitson, Annie Klementon, Emma Klementon, Dylan Knapp, Jacob Kozlowski, Andrew Labbe, Gracie Leahy, John Lisella, Samuel Logan, Aaron Maher, Samuele Marchio, Admir Masic, Chase Millen,

Vincent Milluzzo, Ninell Mnatsakanian, Alison Monroe, Sean Moquin, Ethan Moreschi, Paige Muscillo, Rayne Nickerson, Marcus Nieves, Camila Nobre, Anis Nurkic, Hannah Ocasio, Shiv Patel, Sequoia Perryman, Lauren Peruta, Taylor Roberts, Amanda Roeder, Amelia Rokes, Gino Santilli, Daniel Scheuermann, Giuliana Serrao, Genna Sharp, Ethan Sitler, Jonathan Skowronek, Ty Slesinski, Kathleen Sullivan, Krysta Szymecski, Olivia Szymecski, Matthew Tine, Jenna Toce, Clare Tonucci, Bhakti Vansadia, Gabriela Villagra, Taylor Wallowitz, Devon Whelchel, Xavier White, Emily Wolf, Zachary Zurzola and Natalie Zwick.

### Grade 8 High Honors

Gabriella Amoddio, Kate Anzidei, Meghan Appel, Erin Bankowski, Michael Bielak, Cristin Blake, Jennifer Breglio, Sienna Brodeur, Dominic Butler, Adriana Cabrera, Aaron Cholewa, Kendall Cholewa, Isabella Contreras, Evan Coppa, Bryce Cox, Alexandria D'Onofrio, Madeleine Day, Hadden Gaunt, Hannah Gebhardt, Alexander Ginter, Kate Griffin, Sophie Gustafson, Declan Hallinan, Garrett Hart, Kennedy Hill, Haley Krawczyk, Alexandra Lombardo, Nathan Malicki, Adriana Mantilla, Carrie Nguyen, Ariana Padilla, Dimple Patel, Lillian Peak, Owen Pearce, Shelly Pettengill, Lindsey Pia, Julia Pitchell, Kayla Platania, Brian Puglielli, Elizabeth Rich, Madison Righi, Veronica Rondinelli, Kaitlin Ryan, Ava Sargent, Isabella Taverney, Franco Tomaino, Lorien Touponse, Hayley Troy, Victoria Villagra, Julia Ward, Riley Wilhelm, Nazanin Zaer and Ella Zagaja. **WL**



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## FEBRUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER



**KEANE FOUNDATION**  
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### 2017 Winter/Spring Upcoming Events

**FREE Saturday Basketball**  
Every Saturday until March 25

Grades K-3 10:30 am - 12 noon  
Grades 4-6 12:30 - 2 pm  
Grades 7+8 2 - 3:30 pm  
9/11 Memorial Sports Center Gym

#### Keane on Kids

After School Programs

January - May, 2017

See Town of Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Brochure

<http://wethersfieldct.com/filestorage/398/422/Rec-Brochure-Winter-Spring-2017.pdf>  
for Sign up or [www.keanefoundation.org](http://www.keanefoundation.org) for more information

#### Kids Vacation Day

9/11 Memorial Sports Center

Wednesday of April Vacation Week  
April 12, 2017

Call Community Center office to reserve your space 860-721-2950

#### UNICO/KEANE FOUNDATION ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Monday, May 22, 2017  
Wethersfield Country Club

#### ANNUAL Keane Foundation 5K Run/Walk

Stillman Field (Garden Street near Hanmer School)

June 4 2017

#### Keane Foundation Running Club

At each Elementary School

April 21 - June 2

#### Family Picnic of Remembrance of 9/11

September 10, 2017  
Broad Street Green, 5-7 pm  
Bring your own Picnic Supper

#### COVE SIDE CARNIVAL

Cove Park Wethersfield

October 13, 14, 15, 2017

### Keane Foundation 5K to be held on June 4

This is a Certified, Flat-track course that begins in Standish Park near the DMV and follows Garden Street, taking runners through beautiful Old Wethersfield. Set a personal goal, and build endurance and enjoy participating (run, jog or walk) in a 5K. Running Clubs exercise and stretch together and represent their school in the Roadrace.

Early Registration is \$15, Race Day Registration is \$20. Children 10 and under are \$5. Registration will be 9:30 -10:30 am in Hanmer School Gym. (Please be prompt as runners will not be registered after 10:45 am) Mail your check to: P.O. Box 290742, Wethersfield, CT 06129-0742.

The registration forms will be distributed in early May through the schools, watch for it in the backpacks. Also available at the Town Hall or at the Community Center. See you all at the 5K!



### Running Club Spring 2017

Grades 3-6. Develop and encourage children of all running abilities to progress from their current level to completing a 5K (3.1 miles). Set goals and build up endurance and self-esteem while preparing to participate (run, jog or walk) in the Keane Foundation 5K on June 4, 2017.



### A Message from the Keane Foundation

This year the Keane Foundation launched the Keane on Kids After School Enrichment Program at 5 Wethersfield Elementary Schools. The successful individual registrations for the Program were in cooperation with the Town of Wethersfield Parks and Recreation, truly a Public/Private Collaboration!

The program currently runs for 1 hour after school, 3 days a week at most of the schools, with offerings such as Cooking, Mad Science, Gym Games, Yoga, Board Games, Art Programs, Dance and Chess, with 503 children participating this fall alone! In Winter and Spring 2017 there will be additional exciting programs for students to choose from, including Drama and Musicals at 2 Schools! Programs are designed by a program Coordinator, and a site coordinator at each school ensures safe arrival and dismissal. The fees for each program pay for instruction and materials.

Silas Deane Middle School After School Intramurals was again supported by a grant from the Keane Foundation, and this year will include tutoring and homework help as well.

Additional groups in town that received funds this year to help support programs were, Senior Center Chair Yoga, Wethersfield PTO's Fall Movie on the Green, Hartford Symphony Orchestra programs for elementary schools, Pieces Literary Magazine and the Wethersfield Studies at Wethersfield High School.

Nonprofits and school groups can apply for grants in March and September each year. The Grant Application can be found on our website: [keanefoundation.org](http://keanefoundation.org). Priority is given

to programs that have the most participants, and the most variety, and programs in the town of Wethersfield.

The Cove Side Carnival is a very successful annual event. The success allowed the proceeds of the Bank. Many of the children are still experiencing the economy and the need for them to make a difference.

Other successful programs include the UNICO/Keane Foundation Luminaria Sale, which is funded from donations from the community.

Of course, the Keane Foundation is grateful for the many individuals who have donated their time and money to bring such a successful event to the community.

Those who have donated to bring such a successful event to the community.



Keep your donations local.  
Consider giving a portion of your  
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to help support the  
**Keane Foundation**  
and see how we give back!



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Thanks

### 9th Annual Cove Side Carnival is Coming Back!



Save the Dates  
October 13, 14  
& 15, 2017

Mark your Calendar now



## Foundation President

programs that benefit larger numbers of participants, as well as the neediest children's programs in the community. Amounts granted and partial grants maybe awarded.

The Cove Side Carnival in October was successful this year, mainly because of the beautiful warm weather each of the 3 days! That success allowed us to donate our net Carnival proceeds of \$19,000 to the Wethersfield Food Bank. Many of our town's children (and adults) will be experiencing the effects of a sluggish economy and this food assistance will allow them to make ends meet.

Other successful fund raisers this year were NICO/Keane Foundation Golf Tournament, Keane Foundation 5K Road Race, the Maria Sales at holiday time, as well as giving from Voya Financial and directed donations from United Way.

Of course we still are the grateful recipient of many individual donations from all across the county and from within town. One donor wrote her donation this year, "I truly enjoy writing checks at Christmas time, I wish it could be a year-round thing!"

Those heartfelt sentiments are what help us bring such joy to our community in programs.

Thank you to everyone who has helped to make The Richard M. Keane Foundation a reality, and so successful!

**Gratefully,**  
**Judy Keane,** President  
Richard M. Keane Foundation



## Keane on Kids After School Enrichment Programs

The Kane on Kids After School Enrichment Program launched in the fall with huge success and continues with a full array of winter and spring offerings. Kane on Kids After School Enrichment Program's vision is to consistently provide a variety of After School Enrichment Programs at all Wethersfield Elementary Schools in a safe and fun environment in which all children can participate in athletic, academic and social programs with the support and guidance of caring adults.

Registration is through the Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Department. Online registration for all programs is available at the website below. Children may sign up for one day or multiple days for programs offered at their school. The Keane on Kids After School Enrichment Director, Caroline Fazzina, has designed programs with suggestions from parents and school administration in mind, while also providing a wide variety of programs for students with different interests. Programs will vary seasonally at each school.

There is also a site coordinator at each school who will greet the children at the end of the school day, ensure that the after school program runs smoothly, and monitor safe dismissal at the end of the program. Please visit the Park and Rec link for information and registration: <http://wethersfieldct.com/filestorage/398/422/Rec-Brochure-Winter-Spring-2017.pdf>



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## Thanks to those who already give!



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**Dates:**  
3, 14  
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dar now!

# Keane Foundation Kid's Vacation Day Program

**T**he Keane Foundation will again host **KIDS VACATION GYM DAY** on **Wednesday April 12, 2017** at the 9/11 Memorial Sports Center at the Pitkin Community Center, 30 Greenfield Street, Wethersfield.

**KIDS VACATION GYM DAY** has become an exciting destination for kids during vacation! Younger children enjoy games, music and play equipment. Older kids love the kick-ball, dodge ball and basketball pick-up games. Board Games, Beading and Computers have been fun for those who choose not to play in the Gym.

## Schedule for Kids Vacation Days

**9-10 am** 2-4 year olds (Parent and toddler)  
**10:30-12 noon** 5-7 year olds.  
**1-3 pm** 8-12 year olds.

Fee is \$1.00 per child, additional donations welcome!  
Registration is required! Call to enroll your child (860-721-2950)  
and bring the registration form that comes home in backpacks  
with your child that day.

**For additional information visit <http://wethers-fieldct.com/filestorage/398/422/Rec-Brochure-Winter-Spring-2017.pdf> or our website**

**[www.keanefoundation.org](http://www.keanefoundation.org)**



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# **FREE Open Gym Program... Drop In & Play Ball!**

The Keane Foundation with the support of the Parks and Recreation Department proudly offers FREE SATURDAY Open Gym at the Pitkin Community Center 9/11 Memorial Sports Complex now through March 23. Kids and Families are welcome! Age group times may be shared to allow family play at the discretion of the staff.

**Basketball,  
Dodgeball,  
Kickball,  
Wiffleball,  
Hockey  
& more...**

**Saturdays**  
**February 4, 11, 18, 25**  
**March 4, 11, 18, 25**

10:30 am - 12:00 pm Grades K - 3  
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm Grades 4 - 6  
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm Middle School

**This schedule is subject to change. Cancellations will be posted on the Northeast door when needed.**

## 15th Anniversary Picnic of Remembrance



The September 11 15th Anniversary Picnic of Remembrance saw better weather this year, and was enjoyed by all. The Police and Fire Departments led the evening remembrance with Color Guards and Pledge of Allegiance. Next year's Picnic will be on Sunday September 10, 2017.



## Save the Date!

**WHAT:** Keane Foundation/UNICO Golf Outing

**WHEN:** Monday, May 22th, 2017

**WHERE:** Wethersfield Country Club

**START:** 10:30 a.m. – Registration

**12:30 p.m. – Shotgun Start with a Scramble Format**

**PRICE: \$175.00 Per Person**

For more information, call Tony Santucci @ 860-529-5697,  
or Judy Keane @860-563-3387  
(Watch for Brochure coming soon!)

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Again!**



# State of the town

Leaders remain optimistic despite fiscal concerns

by Mark Jahne  
Editor

**T**he mood at the annual State of the Town breakfast meeting the morning of Jan. 19 was one of optimism. It usually is. That's because this gathering provides state, local government and school officials with the opportunity to highlight the positive things that have taken place in town over the past 12 months.

But lurking in the background is a more than \$1 billion state budget deficit and uncertainty over whether the new administration in Washington, D.C., will cut funding for federal government programs that affect the state and town.

"We're going into a very

challenging time," Mayor Paul Montinieri said.

That said, he added that town finances are in good shape and the government and schools are well managed. The mayor also cited grand list growth.

"The health of our town is very good," he said. "Business development continues to happen in a robust fashion."

Montinieri said vacancies on the Silas Deane Highway are few and several buildings feature new or renovated construction. The Wethersfield High School expansion and renovation project is coming to an end in a few months.

He is hopeful that the vacant Weight Watchers building across



Courtesy photo

**This is what the vacant Fun Zone property on the Silas Deane Highway will look like once it is redeveloped as a mixed-use site featuring more than 150 apartments.**

the street from the Wethersfield Shopping Center, which is under contract, will close on that contract this calendar year. That would eliminate a large eyesore along the Silas Deane.

Speaking of eyesores, he was delighted to report that the other large eyesore, the long-vacant Fun Zone property at 1178 Silas Deane Highway, is going through review by the appropriate land use boards for a project valued at \$30 million.

Lexington Partners, LLC, of Hartford proposes to demolish the Fun Zone structure, re-grade the site and construct The Borden, a mixed-use development featuring 151 apartments and a restaurant. A state grant will provide part of the funding.

Town Manager Jeff Bridges is pleased that the WHS project is nearing its end.

"This is the largest public works project this town has ever done. We're all very proud of it," he said.

Bridges talked about the need to make changes to state labor laws to allow municipalities more flexibility when dealing with unions. He said steps have been taken to reduce the cost of government by negotiating contracts with high-deductible health insurance, 401K retirement accounts rather than pensions, and no more retiree health coverage.

Bridges, who is president of the Connecticut Town and City Management Association, then spoke of the benefits of taking certain steps toward regional government services. He predicted that regionalization will be a hot topic at the State Capitol this legislative session.

Several examples already exist including the Metropolitan District

and Central Connecticut Health District. Area fire departments provide mutual aid support and several area police departments have combined resources for SWAT, drunken driving enforcement, accident reconstruction and major crime investigation.

"When you talk about regionalization, we're there," Bridges said.

Peter Gillespie, town director of planning and economic development, reviewed the past 12 months. There were 22 new business starts in 2016, consistent with previous years.

"We have had numerous grand openings and ribbon cuttings," he said.

Building permits were down in 2016 year but the town still received more than \$20 million in permit fees. Commercial investment increased significantly.

In addition to The Borden, a new 24-apartment complex is planned at 275 Ridge Road.

"We haven't seen an apartment building built in Wethersfield for 30 years and we've got two coming on line," Gillespie said.

There are also two new subdivisions being constructed in the southern part of town, something else that has not happened for many years. They involve a total of 30 homes.

Superintendent of Schools Michael Emmett praised the high school project and invited the business community members present to take a tour of the new facility.

"This project has provided multiple surprises and many challenges," he said.

Security cameras are now in place at all seven public schools. Emmett said it is time to start thinking about the future of the elementary schools, all of which are aging,

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and when they might need to be renovated.

"Further construction projects are not in the immediate future," he said.

He spoke with pride about the accomplishments of local students.

"The district saw among the highest rates on the Smarter Balanced Assessment [tests] in the state of Connecticut," he said.

He also believes that the district's research-based curriculum is providing positive results and reported that the Wethersfield Transition Academy, previously housed in the Pitkin Community Center, has moved into larger space on the Silas Deane Highway.

The four members of the town's legislative delegation addressed the approximately 100 people in attendance. The breakfast was sponsored by the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce.

They acknowledged the state's fiscal crisis but expressed confidence that it will be solved and emphasized the need to look to the future.

"This is the most difficult year we've ever experienced," state Sen. John Fonfara said. "This is more of a revenue issue than it is anything else."

He said the four pillars of tax revenue all restructured their operations and that cost the state a huge amount of money. Those pillars are the defense, hedge fund, pharmaceutical and insurance industries.

"We're going to continue to work to find ways to grow sectors" of the

## "We haven't seen an apartment building built in Wethersfield for 30 years and we've got two coming on line."

—Peter Gillespie

economy, he added.

Fonfara contended doing that will encourage young adults to live and work in Connecticut after they graduate from college. Many of them leave for better career opportunities elsewhere.

"We have no policy in the state to try to keep these kids here," he said.

State Rep. Antonio Guerrero used the opportunity to renew his

annual call to reestablish tolls on certain highways. These would be electronic in nature and not the traditional booths staffed by collectors. The Massachusetts Turnpike recently switched to an electronic system.

"This is the year we may see this coming to a vote. This year, we're running a huge deficit. We need another source of revenue," he said.

Guerrera predicted that electronic tolls would produce an

longer place such a heavy reliance on the gas tax as it has done for many decades. That's because fuel-efficient cars, hybrids and all-electric vehicles mean motorists will be buying less and less gasoline in the years ahead.

Guerrera also said that Hartford should look to the success of Boston's "Big Dig" and tunnel the highways that run through the city, in particular to open up the riverfront for development.

"We have some financial problems but we're going to get through it," Doyle said when it was his turn to speak. "The revenue picture has changed fundamentally over the past eight years."

"It's always a balance," state Rep. Russell Morin said.

While there is great pressure to think in the here and now, he contended that long-term thinking is needed to make sure businesses here are able to attract people who are highly talented and trained for jobs not yet developed.

"We have to be able to think about what's coming down the road," Morin said. [WL](#)

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## Eight for eight

Wethersfield author sticks to his goal of writing a book a year

by Mara Dresner  
Staff Writer

**H**e's not quite as prolific as James Patterson, but Wethersfield author F. Mark Granato has achieved a goal that would make many authors envious – a novel a year.

His latest, entitled "This Boy," is set to be released at the end of 2016, making it eight in a row. The book is set in Hartford's South End in the 1960s.

"I wanted to try to write a love story. That was something I had never done before. I wanted to write

something with substance, not just some sappy, meaningless piece of drivel," he said.

"I wanted it to be a real love story with a solid background. It's from the perspective of a young man growing up in the South End of Hartford. The main character, who like myself came up from nothing, falls in love with a girl from Fenwick

"It's like a reverse Cinderella. He falls in love with her and realizes he's completely over his head. It starts with a Beatles concert at Shea Stadium in 1965 and the story takes off from there."

Granato said there's a lot of history in the pages.

"All of my books have multiple plots going. I wanted to have him be looking through the eyes of a South End boy in the tumultuous '60s. I was in high school in the 1960s. It was an incredible decade of change. It never really dawned on me how tumultuous it was until I started writing the story," he said.

"I write from things that were seminal events in my own life. It doesn't really dawn on me when I'm writing it, but a lot of me, a lot of my past, my history, is written into

the story. This very much follows that path."

There are three elements to this story: the love story itself, the racial unrest aspect and the Vietnam War.

"Hartford had [race] riots in '67, '68 and '69. It was a very, very bad time," he said.

He did extensive research while working on the book, which is one of the reasons the project took 14 months to complete.

"When I retired, I made myself vow I would write one book a year. This was probably my most ambitious work. It's almost 500 pages.

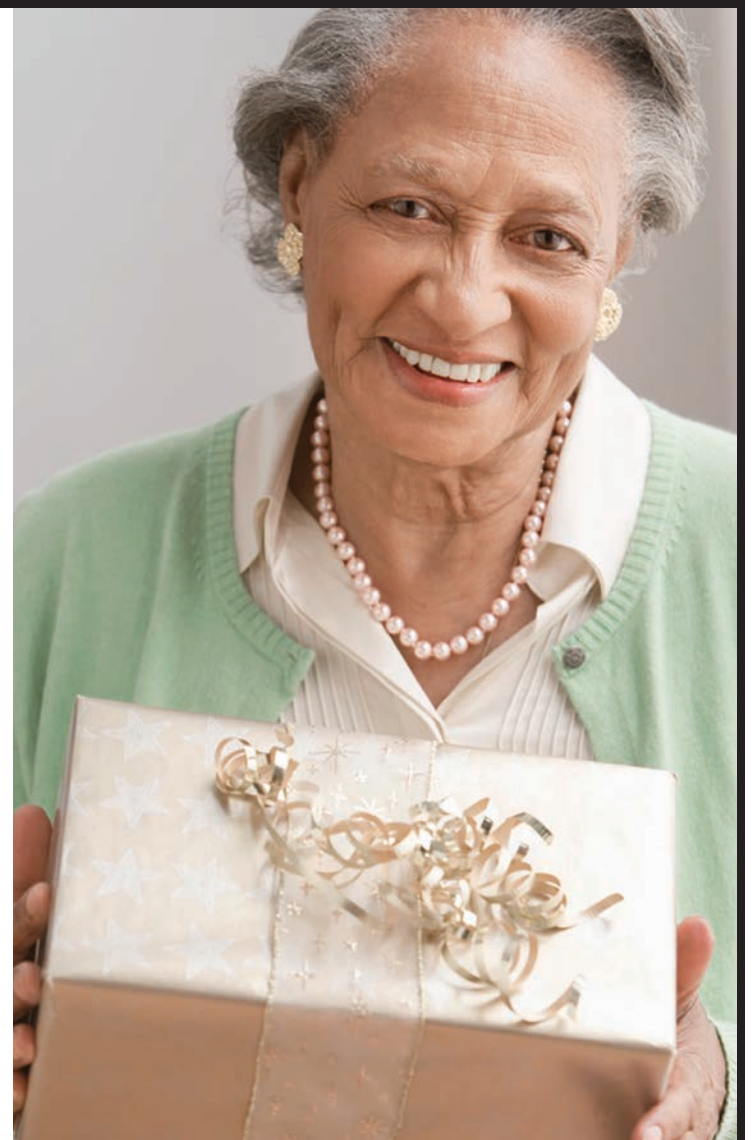
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## “You can picture all the places. I think that’s why Wethersfield readers enjoy his books so much.”

—Lisa Orchen

It represents a tremendous amount of research,” he said.

“The love story is from my imagination; the historical part is all real. That took a lot of research. I was in high school when all these things happened. I had fuzzy memories of all these things. When you want to get in the details, you do a lot of research,” he added.

“What I found was an enormous number of parallels of the 1960s to where we are in America today. The year 2016 is not all that different from the year 1966 in foreign affairs, in our racial unity – or lack thereof. Some would say we are as close to a race war today as we were in 1966. Despite all our well-intentioned legislation, we haven’t made a lot of real progress.”

Granato’s previous works include “Unleashed,” the story of one man’s fight against a corrupt corporation; “Out of Reach: The Day Hartford Hospital Burned”; “Finding David,” a Vietnam-era novel; the thriller “Of Winds and Rage”; an historical fiction account of the Great New England Hurricane of 1938; the family saga “Barn Find”; “Beneath His Wings: The Plot to Murder Lindbergh” and “Titanic: The Final Voyage.”

“My subject matters are all over the place,” he said.

“This Boy” required a lot of prep work prior to the actual writing.

“Because I write historical fiction, it demands a lot of work before I’m ready. I write morning, noon and night, whenever I can. My wife [Bobbie] will come in at 11, 12 o’clock at night, and say, “OK, enough.” Writing can really take you away into another world.”

While Granato knows the plots of the book before he starts, sometimes he ends up in different places.

“I write sequentially. I start at the beginning and finish at the end. While I have a general idea of what my story is when I

start, the final product is sometimes a surprise to me,” he said.

“That’s what I love about fiction. I start down one path and I’ll take a sharp right-hand turn. It takes you down various avenues and channels you might not [think you’ll] go down.

“In the process of research, you find little nuggets of gold. You knew the big facts, the headlines when you were living it, but you didn’t know what was underneath.”

After he finishes a few chapters, he’ll ask his wife for her feedback. When he finishes each book, he turns

to a close circle of friends for both general feedback and proofreading assistance.

Lisa Orchen of Wethersfield first met Granato when her children were at Charles Wright School, where Bobbie Granato was teaching. Each year, F. Mark Granato would write a play for the second graders to perform.

“They loved being part of the second grade play,” she said.

She is inspired by his commitment to writing.

“That calling was burned into his heart when he was teenager, now he’s living it. I have such admiration for him. It’s such a wonderful story,” she said.

“He’s really following the gift he was given. It just blows me away. It’s such a strong piece of who he was meant to be.”

Orchen describes him as a storyteller.

“He uses an immense amount of dialogue. Some of

the books are real page-turners,” she said.

The new book resonates with her.

“‘This Boy’ is very powerful. It’s such a strong social commentary. He understands some of the societal mistakes made in the ‘60 and early ‘70s. We’re playing out those same

mistakes now,” she said.

Beyond simply enjoying the plots, Orchen said that there’s a special aspect of the books.

“What’s really fun for those of us who are local readers is the settings are almost always really familiar. There are familiar places in Connecticut and New England,” she said. “You can picture all

the places. I think that’s why Wethersfield readers enjoy his books so much.”

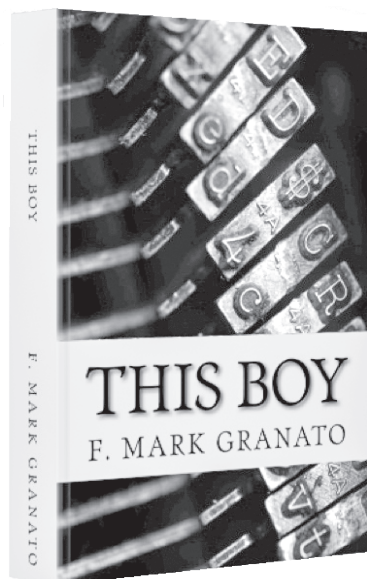
Granato publishes his books through CreateSpace, a self-publishing arm of Amazon. They’re available in both print and e-books at a variety of booksellers.

As he’s launching “This Boy,” he already has started work on his next novel, called “Brothers.”

“It’s the story of a Wethersfield family with six brothers who somehow miraculously all survived during the Second World War. They all saw action and they all lived to tell about it,” he said.

“They came back and created a great business here in Wethersfield. It’s about how they came to the war and took care of each other. It’s a very poignant story.” **WL**

Learn more at [fmarkgranato.com](http://fmarkgranato.com).



**“This Boy” is Wethersfield author F. Mark Granato’s latest work. It’s his eighth book in as many years.**

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# Events *spotlight*

## SOUPer Bowl Party

Feb. 5, 5 p.m.

*CenterPoint Community Church*  
840 Silas Deane Highway  
860-571-8415

The church sponsors this annual party and participants are invited to bring their favorite homemade soup or chili to be judged by a pair of impartial jurors. Prizes will be awarded for the best soup and the best chili. Judging begins at 5:30. Admission is free. Watch the first half of the NFL Super Bowl and the half-time show on the big screen while enjoying snacks and dessert. CenterPoint Community Church is located on the first floor of the Marcus Insurance building.



Homemade soup

## Keeney Cultural Series

Feb. 11, 7 p.m.

*Keeney Memorial Cultural Center, 200 Main St.*  
860-529-7656 or visit

[wethersfieldhistory.org](http://wethersfieldhistory.org)

Celebrate George Washington's 285th birthday in the manner Wethersfield residents would have in his heyday, with a ball. Join traditional dance caller Patricia Campbell in the Keeney Ballroom for authentic 18th century country dancing to live period music. This is a participatory event for re-enactors and other interested participants; no prior dance experience is necessary, with 18th century period clothing or festive attire requested. Tickets are \$10 for historical society members and \$12 for non-members and can be purchased in advance or at the door.



Macaroni Dinner

Photo by Lisa Brisson

## "Famous" Macaroni Dinner

Feb. 12, 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*Pitkin Community Center*  
30 Greenfield St., 860-563-3103  
or [johnconsole@sbcglobal.net](mailto:johnconsole@sbcglobal.net)

Wethersfield UNICO volunteers present their long-running annual event featuring a meal of macaroni with homemade sauce and homemade meatballs, salad, garlic bread, beverages and ice cream. Tickets are \$12 for adults and \$7 for children 12 and under and can be purchased at the door or from any UNICO member. If the Pitkin lot is full, a shuttle bus will be available to transport diners from the state Department of Labor parking lot at the corner of Folly Brook Drive and Jordan Lane.

## Fireworks Blast

Feb. 18, 7 p.m.

*Pitkin Community Center*  
30 Greenfield St.  
[wethersfield@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wethersfield@sbcglobal.net)

The Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce is planning a fun evening to help raise money for this year's fireworks display at Cove Park on June 3. This is a BYOB event with a buffet dinner provided by Vito's Pizzeria and music by Entertainment Unlimited. Admission is \$35 per person and tables can be reserved in advance. The reservation deadline is Feb. 14. Contact Joe Marrero at 860-306-1235 or Christina Harris at 860-214-4851 for tickets. **WL**

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# News roundup

## EDIC holds annual salute

The town's Economic Development & Improvement Commission held its annual Salute to Business holiday social Dec. 7 at Wethersfield Country Club. Former mayor Daniel Camilliere received the Betty H. Rosania Award for community service.

The Wethersfield Village Improvement Association's Beautification Award was presented to Shop Rite Hardware. Longevity awards went to Phillip Rouquie, Pine Acres Club, Elaine's restaurant and Heart of the Country.

Special recognition awards were presented as follows: Carmelo Gugliotti, John Kocur of the Cove Deli, Spiro and Julia Koulouris of Heirloom Market at Comstock Ferre, Tony and Larissa Lenoci, Joseph Moruzzi, John Muirhead of Burger King, Mike Panek and Joseph Scarpantonio of Shop Rite Hardware.

The Webb-Deane-Stevens Museum received a Tourism Award.

The top finishers in the annual town photo contest were George Savic (first and second place), Ira Dick and Michael Khlem.

## Academy starts out strong

The Wethersfield Academy for the Arts started the year with a busy schedule of workshops and other activities. Upcoming workshops include Intro to Barque Drawing Feb. 25 and March 11 and Self Portrait Drawing Feb. 11 and March 4.

Both will be taught by Eliza Moser. Figure Drawing Boot Camp with Kathryn Engberg is scheduled from Feb. 13-17 and Portrait Mastercopy with Christina Mastrangelo runs from March 23-25.

The next Open Sketch event is scheduled from 1:30-5:30 p.m. Feb. 4. Participants will draw a clothed model in one pose and the fee is \$10. A show of recent works by Kathryn Engberg has been extended through Feb. 11. It is open Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## Foundation awards early childhood grant

Over the past decade, Wethersfield has seen changes in the well being of its children and families. There has been a significant increase in the percentage of schoolchildren receiving free and reduced-priced lunch and a decline in preschool attendance.

Additionally, the percentage of mothers receiving non-adequate prenatal care is significantly above the state average. The Wethersfield Early Childhood Collaborative has spent 10 years working in partnership with town government, the Board of Education and community partners, including the Graustein Memorial Fund, to improve the odds that these youngest residents are healthy, ready for school and making the most of their community.

To support these efforts, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving awarded the town a three-year \$62,000 grant to expand and sustain its early childhood infrastructure. The grant will help fund programs, resources and staff specifically

dedicated to early childhood.

The foundation's investment will support the hiring of an early childhood coordinator in the town Department of Social and Youth Services. This person will serve as a bridge between the town, school board and community partners and will coordinate town and school services for young children and their families.

## Register for CREC preschool

The Soundbridge Early Learning Center is a preschool for ages 3-5 accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. It provides an enriched private preschool experience for typically developing children from this and nearby communities.

It also provides an educationally appropriate public preschool experience for children who have hearing loss and are learning spoken language. Registration for fall 2017 has begun. For more information contact Kelly Ann Clark at [kaclark@crec.org](mailto:kaclark@crec.org) or call 860 529-4260.

## Turning 65?

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### Apply for scholarships

The Wethersfield Dollars for Scholars Committee reminds all graduating Wethersfield High School seniors that the deadline for final application submission is March 10 and the deadline for guidance counselor information is Feb. 24. For more information see [wethersfield.dollarsforscholars.org](http://wethersfield.dollarsforscholars.org).

### Art displayed at library

An exhibit by the students of Wethersfield

Academy for the Arts instructor Nick Frasco is on display at the Wethersfield Library through the end of February. The exhibit consists of portraits, still lifes, landscapes and more by students ages 6-16.

In addition, Miniature Scenes of Urban Life are on display at the library through the end of February. Created using mixed media, these scenes are the creation of ninth-grader Jason Bove.

### Become part of teen theater

The Wethersfield Teen Theater Company is looking for directors, vocal directors, pit directors, choreographers, set, lighting, sound and costume designers and stage managers for this summer's production of "Bye Bye Birdie."

Anyone between the ages of 15-22 who wants to experience this theatrical company is encouraged to email Evan Barrow, chairman of the board of directors, at [evanbarrow@cox.net](mailto:evanbarrow@cox.net). **WL**

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## Business notes



**Katy Black**, a licensed funeral director at D'Esopo Funeral Chapel, earned certified funeral service practitioner status. She is shown with Michael Klett, George D'Esopo, Katy Black and Dan McCarthy. D'Esopo requires that all of its licensed funeral directors

achieve this status within three years of joining the staff.

The National Funeral Directors Association awarded **D'Esopo Funeral Chapel** in Wethersfield and East Hartford with its Pursuit of Excellence Award. This is the 16th



consecutive year that D'Esopo was honored, putting it in the top 1 percent of funeral homes nationwide. Shown are George D'Esopo, Janet Klett and Michael Klett.

**MiddConn Federal Credit Union** of Middletown voted in favor

of merging into Dutch Point Credit Union. The merger was previously approved by both the federal and state regulators. The combined credit unions will serve approximately 23,500 members and have assets in excess of \$280 million. **WL**



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## Shelby

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Courtesy photos

*Inquiries about adoption may be made at the Connecticut Humane Society, 701 Russell Road, Newington. Call 860-594-4500. More information, including videos, can be found online at [cthumane.org](http://cthumane.org). Click on "Adopt" and "Newington." The Connecticut Humane Society is a private organization and has no time limits for adoption. WL*

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# Editorial

## Bracing for a tough budget year

Courtesy photo

**J**ust when we thought there was a light at the end of the tunnel, that light turns out to be an oncoming train. That's a metaphor for the fiscal situation every city and town in Connecticut is facing this coming fiscal year that starts July 1.

State government is buried under a deficit well in excess of \$1 billion and growing. How our elected leaders let it get to that point over the years is a question that must some day be answered, but in the meantime, we have to deal with more pressing matters.

In addition, the city of Hartford is teetering on the edge of municipal bankruptcy. That would send serious ripples not just through the city, but into the suburbs and beyond.

Mayor Luke Bronin has been visiting any town that will have him to explain how Hartford got into a fiscal mess that is at least \$50 million this year and projected

to be more over the next few years as delayed and refinanced municipal debt comes due.

He has publicly suggested a variety of options that could save the city but they are not likely to happen. His choices are few and none of them are particularly appealing.

State aid is the usual way out of such a crisis but since the state is swimming in all that aforementioned red ink this is a most unlikely result. Legislators will be hard pressed to get their own fiscal house in order.

Not only are they not likely to bail out Hartford, but towns throughout the state – including this one – are almost certain to see reduced amounts of municipal aid and Education Cost Sharing funds. That will create huge pressure on local budgets.

Town councils and boards of education are going to have to enact difficult and far-reaching cuts to make the books balance.

Popular programs will almost certainly have to be cut. Employees will almost certainly have to be laid off.

Nobody wants to do this, but they may have no choice but to reduce library and senior center hours, cut back on public works, trim the workforce and put on hold any expenditures that are not absolutely necessary.

School districts may have no choice but to increase class sizes, reduce arts, sports and music programs, lay off teachers and put the brakes on implementing new technologies.

The other option, of course, is a moderate to significant tax hike. No local politician wants to do that, especially in a year when they will be on the ballot in November.

It's vital that people take all of this into account and attend public hearings and other meetings where input can be given to those charged with making these difficult decisions. **WL**

# wethersfield LIFE

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# Letters

## Clarifying an issue

### To the Editor:

In the January issue of Wethersfield LIFE there was a letter from an Old Wethersfield resident regarding the traffic triangle at State Street and Hartford Avenue. I would like to clarify what happened.

The planting of this island was a Wethersfield Beautification Trust effort. As a volunteer in the planting, care and weeding of this large xeric garden, I was notified that the town planned to enlarge the triangle to encompass a pedestrian walk as a public safety project largely around the farmer's market.

The enlarged traffic island was more than could be managed by volunteers so it was decided to grass it over. Notified by the town engineer on the timing of the transition, we were able to remove the perennials and bulbs we were interested in saving.

I believe the town officials and town crews did a very fine job throughout the process.

—Betty Standish

## An Eversource Christmas Gift (to the tune of A Night Before Christmas)

### To the Editor:

T'was the days before Christmas and all thru the town,

Eversource was butchering trees, without a care to be found.

In the board room they say is where the secret is kept,

"Go in fast and get those trees down."

"Go before those fools know and we will quickly leave town."

A comment was raised in the board room that day,

"Tree City USA is their designation on street signs we're told."

The question that followed asked,

"Should we plant trees to replace those that were so healthy and old?"

"Ho! Ho! Ho!" was heard from their leader in a sinister tone.

"Replace trees in a town so quaint?"

"You are asking me like I am some sort of saint."

"It's profits we're after with shareholders to please"

"We will take those signs down, just like the trees"

With the landscape all changed to the next town they will sneak.

I hope this letter will warn them about the secrets they keep.

—Paul Pace

## Likes career day concept

### To the Editor:

I am a senior at Wethersfield High School taking the Wethersfield Studies class. As an assignment, we all had to read a few articles from a recent Wethersfield LIFE and there was one article that caught my eye.

The article "Emerson-Williams School Holds Its First Career Day" was the most intriguing article I read. The reason for my interest in this article was the fact that career days were never a common thing when I was in elementary school.

Maybe if our school did something similar to this, I would have more of an idea as to what I want to do beyond college.

I found this article awesome to read because of how these kids are being given the opportunity to start thinking about their futures so early in their lives. For all we know, this career day that the children at Emerson-Williams went to could end up changing their lives forever.

The children weren't being forced to choose a career now, just being given the opportunity to see all of their options. The other reason behind the career day was to motivate the children into working hard in school.

Overall, this article was a great read, and I recommend continuing on keeping the town of Wethersfield updated on similar events like this going on in the school system. The reason I recommend this is because it shows how much our school system is trying to make a change in the children and how much the administration actually cares about the student body.

—Jordan Laske

## Pollution is a problem

### To the Editor:

I am a senior at Wethersfield High School and writing on behalf of the article called "Delving Deeper." I believe the article portrayed an

overall message of the importance of cleaning up the park, as it is a large part of Wethersfield's history.

However, I don't believe that this article stressed enough the amount of pollution in Mill Woods. If you walk through Mill Woods, you would see that trash is everywhere in the surrounding woods and in the ponds. There have been occasions where I have pulled a shopping cart out of the pond behind the swimming pool.

I have also pulled out large plastic bags that put the animals' lives at risk. Not only are there the pollutants caused by runoff of fertilizer and lawn products, but a lot of trash from pedestrians, too.

I also agree on putting more recycling bins at the park, but also more available trash cans to encourage people to properly dispose of their waste. I believe if this were stressed more in the article, people would be encouraged to not litter and to throw out their trash or recycle more.

This in turn, would help raise awareness of its natural beauty and the value of maintaining it in a clean and litter-free manner.

I do think the section of the article talking about the mill on Bell Pond, Adams Mill, is very interesting. I have spent a lot of time around there and it raised a lot of questions for me.

One was where was the actual mill located? This actually caused me to go to Mill Woods and try to see if I can find any evidence of the building.

Overall, this is a well-written article and I enjoyed reading it.

—Eric Shields

## Liked newspaper story

### To the Editor:

I am a Wethersfield High School student writing in response to your article "Delving Deeper." Hard to believe, but our class assignment to read your issue was my first time ever reading a newspaper.

"Delving Deeper" was a very well-written article and it was straight to the point. I was very surprised that a student from our school took the time to learn more about the history of Mill Woods.

After taking her time and researching information about the

park, she decided that we had to make a change. She mentioned "it's an important part of Wethersfield ... there's garbage and pollution and I want to help clean it up."

After reading that, I realized that we all can help, too, even by doing little things like taking a walk and cleaning up any trash that we see. It might not be much, but we are still contributing to help our town.

It was also great to see the photo of Mr. Woodworth. He generously donated his time teaching some lessons in my Wethersfield Studies class. Seeing him take part in another amazing cause was very nice.

A lot of people extend themselves as volunteers in Wethersfield and we should take the time to appreciate them. I really did enjoy reading this article. Hopefully others will take part in protecting our beautiful nature.

—Daziyah Armstrong

## Pipeline story made an impression

### To the Editor:

I am a senior at Wethersfield High School. I recently read your article entitled "Making a Stand" by Allie Rivera from the January issue of Wethersfield LIFE and I just want to say that I am really proud of the Americans who were and are willing to protest for what is right, even if it may not concern them.

Irrelevant of profits, the government shouldn't endanger the environment by trying to install an oil pipeline. I think it is wonderful that the efforts of all the people who have spent their time protesting there has paid off and that the pipeline has been stopped, at least temporarily.

I would also like to say thank you to all of those people who did protest against this pipeline. It can be hard sometimes to face adversity and to stand up for what you believe in, which is why I think these people who helped stop this pipeline really deserve the credit for ending it.

It's great to know that the people of America still have a sense of right and wrong and are willing to stand up against the government if it is stepping out of line.

—Anthony Berry



February 2017

# health & wellness

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## Healthy Living

# Medical myths

Health professionals set the record straight

by Lynn Woike  
*LIFE Staff*

**H**ealth myths, misinformation, half-truths and old wives' tales continue to dictate our choices and behaviors. Casual research around the Internet can leave you confused, so we turned to local experts to set the record straight.

**Static stretching  
has little benefit  
before a workout  
and may even  
reduce  
performance.**

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## Healthy Living

**MYTH:** Stretching before exercise reduces the risk of injury.

**TRUTH:** Boguslaw Badon, licensed physical therapist and owner of Farmington Valley Physical Therapy, said many of her clients feel that pre-exercise stretching will reduce the risk of injury through improvements in range of motion, decreased muscle stiffness and increased blood flow. However, none of that is true.

"Traditional stretching, where you hold a pose with your body in such a way so that you feel a pull on your connective tissue or muscles, is called static stretching. Many people will stretch their hamstrings and quads before a run, or arms and shoulders before swimming or tennis. The truth is, you're probably not doing much for your workout and might even be reducing your strength, power and performance," she said.

Studies have concluded that stretching does not affect the incidence of overuse injuries, nor does it reduce the muscle soreness that can come a day or two after having done

too much. In addition, Badon said, static stretching could actually reduce strength and power between 5 percent and 30 percent.

To prepare for exercise, she recommends a gradual aerobic warmup that includes dynamic stretching for sports that require more range of motion.

"Static stretching is better as part of cool down and recovery when reducing muscle tension and elasticity makes more sense and you won't be immediately relying on your muscles to generate power," she said.

Static stretching as well as exercise systems that emphasize eccentric muscle strengthening like Pilates, Somatic Movement, Gyrotonic or Yoga, all are beneficial as part of a well-rounded fitness regimen to help maintain a strong, flexible, coordinated body.

**MYTH:** Weight loss is just calories in vs. calories out.

**TRUTH:** While weight loss advice is often pared down to sayings such as "You have to burn more calories than you eat to lose weight," Renee Bordeaux,

owner of Bordeaux Nutrition in Newington, said, "Most people who are overweight actually don't consume enough calories."

Most people, she explained, will lose some weight by cutting back moderately on calories, but that's not the whole story.

"If you cut back too much, your body thinks you are starving, causing it to burn even less calories, making weight loss more difficult."

She recommends eating high-quality foods including lean meats, fresh fruits and vegetables to fuel your metabolism throughout the day.

"That way, the body will feel it is receiving enough calories and will shed excess fat."



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## Healthy Living

**MYTH:** Cracking your knuckles will lead to arthritis.

**TRUTH:** “According to Western Journal of Medicine, a study was conducted on 28 patients of a senior citizen home who were able to recall knuckle cracking as a child or even now, and those who did not. Each patient was asked to demonstrate how they cracked their knuckle, and their hands were examined clinically with X-rays.

Out of the 14 patients who cracked their knuckles, only one had a clinically diagnosed case of osteoarthritis and out of the 14 who were not knuckle crackers, eight patients had diagnosed cases of osteoarthritis,” said Dr. Bradley Visconti of Back to Motion Rehab and Fitness in Newington.

There were no major differences between

those who did and didn’t crack their knuckles, disproving the theory, he said.

As for the sound made when knuckles are “cracked,” Visconti said it is the release of synovial gases and fluid between the joints being manipulated.

**MYTH:** Feed a cold, starve a fever.

**TRUTH:** Dr. Lakshmi Babu, a family medicine physician with a practice at ProHealth of Unionville, said this old adage is wrong.

The thought process had been that eating would warm the body when it had a cold and that avoiding food would keep

it from getting more heated while experiencing a fever.

“Recent medical science has said that we really should feed a cold and feed a fever, because food is fuel and when we’re fighting an illness, we need healthy food,” she said, adding that while it’s important to eat without overeating, it’s even more critical to stay hydrated.

The best thing to drink is water or herbal tea. Hot tea has the added benefit of a vapor that can help combat dry nasal passages when you have a cold. Fluids such as Gatorade or Pedialyte that replace electrolytes are also fine. Alcohol or caffeinated beverages are not good because they contribute to dehydration, “so avoiding those would be a good thing,” Babu said.

**MYTH:** Protein shakes will add muscle and make you bulky

**TRUTH:** Protein is necessary for a healthy, strong physique, said Corey Vincent of American



Nutrition Center in Avon.

“While protein is the building block for muscle tissue, eating protein and drinking shakes will not make you bulky. Protein will help maintain lean muscle tissue, keep you strong for daily activities and help keep you satisfied throughout the day,” he said.

Active individuals should have protein from healthy sources at all meals.

“Protein shakes are an alternative when not enough protein is taken in through food,” Vincent said. **WL**

**Food is important fuel when fighting any illness, cold or fever, and must be combined with proper hydration.**



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## Healthy Living

# Feeling better, *naturally*

**Treating winter  
woes with  
supplements,  
lifestyle choices**

**by Mara Dresner**  
*Staff Writer*

**W**inter is in full swing and that means that we're knee-deep in seasonal woes. Even those of us who stay healthy the rest of the year often find ourselves down and out by the time February rolls around. And

just because an ailment is common doesn't mean it can't make you miserable.

While there are times when reaching for a traditional cure is appropriate and necessary, some folks like to give more natural remedies a try. We spoke to some health-care experts to see what they recommend to prevent and treat some common maladies. Please remember that everyone is different and that no advice is one size fits all. Check with your own health care provider to make sure a supplement is safe for you, especially if you have existing medical conditions or are taking other supplements or medications.

### Cough and cold

"Cold viruses run rampant this time

of year. To avoid getting one, boost your immune system now with a healthy diet.

High sugar and processed foods tend to weaken the immune system.

Gear your diet toward lean proteins, fruits and vegetables to reduce processed foods and boost antioxidants in the body," Renée J. Bordeaux, a registered dietitian, Certified dietitian-nutritionist and certified personal trainer, owner and president of Bordeaux Nutrition in Newington, recommended.

If you do feel a cold coming on, Bordeaux suggests adding a few supplements.

"Try extra vitamin C, a natural antioxidant found abundantly in

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## Healthy Living

citrus fruits and bell peppers. It takes a lot of oranges to boost your C levels. Try supplementing with up to 2,000 mg daily," she said. "Also try Quercetin, which helps decrease the histamine reaction that is responsible for symptoms like a stuffy and runny nose. It is naturally found in foods like apples and cruciferous veggies, but can also be supplemented with up to 750 mg daily."

Sometimes, it's just a cough that's giving you trouble.

"I find anything [like] citrus fruits really helps break up a cough. So I eat lots of oranges and grapefruits or add lemon juice to some hot water or herbal tea first thing in the morning to soothe a cough," Christina Baribault-Ortiz, a healthy lifestyle coach from Glastonbury, said.

She also recommends generally supporting your immune system.

"Organic raw chlorella powder derived from green plants have enough nutrients to kick any cough when consumed regularly," she

noted. "It's very strong, so I recommend adding a small amount – 1 teaspoon – to a smoothie or stir into some orange juice to start. Work this into your regimen regularly and when you do get that inevitable cough/cold, it won't last as long."

### Tummy troubles

It may not be glamorous to discuss, but sooner or later, everyone is struck by a bout of diarrhea. Sharon Hunter, ND, of The Connecticut Center for Health in West Hartford, said causes include viral, bacterial (usually food-borne) and antibiotic-induced.

"It's always wise to call one's health care provider. They will know what is going around, how long it generally lasts and common things to watch out for," she said. "Patients should see the doctor if they experience diarrhea that lasts longer than three days, fever of 102 or higher, signs of dehydration/severe loss of fluids [from] vomiting and/or diarrhea, severe abdominal pain, [or] any

of these symptoms: blood in the stool, black tarry looking stools."

She recommends trying what she said is a "wonderful home treatment for diarrhea":

Applesauce

Add 1/8 tsp cinnamon (650 mg)

Add 1/2 tsp slippery elm powder (1.25 g/1250 mg)

Optional: add carob powder 1/4-1/2 tsp

The addition of a probiotic may be beneficial.

Repeat four to six times daily.

"The slippery elm and probiotic will be beneficial to continue after resolution of the diarrhea in order to continue to soothe the intestines," she noted. "All three ingredients help to stop diarrhea. The cinnamon also helps tone and soothes the intestines. You can repeat the carob and slippery elm multiple times per day."

Hunter said that cinnamon should be limited to 3/4 teaspoon per day for 150-pound adult. Children should limit it to much less, based on weight.

For example, a 50-pound child should not exceed 1/8 teaspoon per day in divided doses, split over four servings.

A smaller child should omit the cinnamon entirely and use only the carob and slippery elm.

"For slippery elm, the powder is best, especially for a child who can't swallow capsules. However, one can purchase caps and open them into the apple sauce," she said. "This treatment works time after time, tastes good and is usually easy to get into kids who are not vomiting. Avoid any foods that aggravate diarrhea and stick to a bland diet."

BRAT is the classic diet for diarrhea, which stands for bananas, rice, applesauce and toast (omitting the toast if gluten free).

### Winter blues

Shorter days can often bring on an attack of the winter blues.

Christine Loudon, ND, of The Connecticut Center for Health in West Hartford, noted that her

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## Healthy Living

practice integrates supplements, herbal medicine and lifestyle approaches.

"Fatigue can be a symptom of illness, and individuals should consult their physician to rule out any underlying medical condition. Seasonal affective disorder can be mild or severe, and if symptoms of depression are severe or interfere with daily life the individual should consult a physician," she noted.

She makes these recommendations for healthy adults on no medications.

"Many people who feel low energy in the winter are responding to the reduced exposure to light. My patients find significant benefit using a 'happy light.' Light therapy can lift mood and energy. In addition, it is one of the best methods for restoring normal sleep patterns. Special lights providing white light – not blue light, which can cause macular degeneration – can be purchased and should provide 10,000 lux at 12 inches or more," she explained.

The dose is 30 minutes of light in the morning.

"Good quality and quantity of sleep is crucial for good energy and mood. We cannot expect to feel energized and happy if we skimp on sleep. I tell my patients to aim for eight hours a night. If a patient is having trouble falling asleep, the light therapy can restore normal patterns. The second option is melatonin. People with SAD have an abnormal melatonin pattern. I often use 1 to 3 mg given at bedtime to restore the sleep pattern," she said.

Melatonin can cause excessive dreaming or nightmares in some individuals.

Magnesium can also help patients with insomnia and fatigue.

"In my patient population, magnesium deficiency is common. The best food sources are leafy greens such as spinach and kale. Almonds are a good source as well. To supplement with magnesium I recommend 200 to 400 mg of magnesium, glycinate if the patient is prone to

anxiety, or citrate if the patient tends toward constipation.

"The most common side effect of magnesium is loose stool and this is more likely with the citrate form. Individuals should not supplement with more than 400 mg without consulting a physician. People with kidney problems must be cautious with magnesium supplements as they may experience toxicity," she explained.

Louden said that even something as basic as breathing can make a difference in how a patient feels.

"Pranayama or breath exercise is a simple, effective way to increase energy and alertness and lift mood. It can be done throughout the day. I encourage my patients to use this at work if they suffer an afternoon slump. Many of my patients sneak away to a bathroom stall and practice this. Alternate nostril breathing is one of my favorites. To increase energy, start with the inhale on the right; to calm down at bedtime, start with the inhale on the left," she

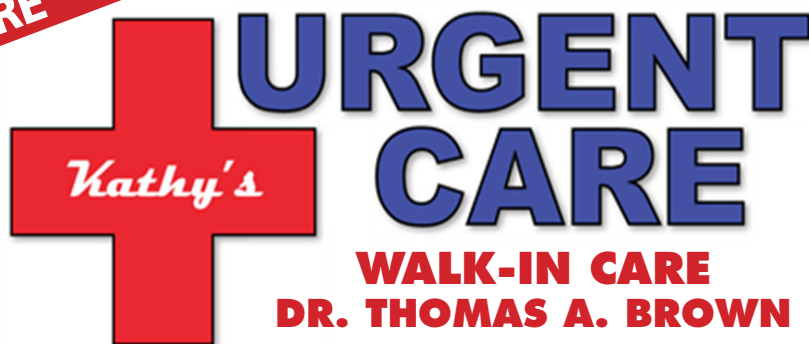
noted. "Hold your right thumb over your right nostril and inhale deeply through your left nostril. At the peak of your inhalation, close off your left nostril with your fourth finger, then exhale smoothly through your right nostril. After a full exhalation, inhale through the right nostril, closing it off with your right thumb at the peak of your inhalation. Continue performing alternate nostril breathing for one to five minutes, following the same pattern."

She also recommends aromatherapy to help with mood.

"Studies show aromatherapy can have a profound influence on mood, and I recommend aromatherapy for anxiety and depression. For increasing energy, mental alertness and improving mood, lemon or lemon-grass are effective," Loudon said.

"A diffuser is the best way to use essential oils, but for energy on the go, my patients will place two to three drops on a cotton handkerchief and inhale the scent as they drive to work." **WL**

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## Healthy Living

# When the pain won't quit

## Headache center receives major grant

by Mara Dresner  
Staff Writer

**D**r. Brian Grosberg, director of the Hartford HealthCare Headache Program, was awarded the first-ever Migraine Research Foundation "Impact" Award, which he shares with Harvard Medical School's Dr. Rami Burstein. This \$250,000 grant, announced

in the fall, will fund research on status migrainosus, a severe form of migraine that lasts longer than three days.

Grosberg spoke to the LIFE papers about migraines and his hopes for the headache center, which has multiple locations, including West Hartford and Wethersfield.

### Q. What's a migraine?

A. A migraine is a neurologic condition; it's not just a headache. Nearly 36 million people suffer from migraine, more women than men. It's characterized by a moderate to severe headache, which can often be associated with hypersensitivity to light or sound, and can sometimes be accompanied by



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## Healthy Living

nausea and/or vomiting. A migraine typically lasts four hours, up to three days if it's untreated or unsuccessfully treated. And for 20- to 25-percent of people with migraine there is an aura present.

**Q. How did your interest in migraine develop?**

A. Serendipity. In the first year of my neurology residency, I took care of a woman who is a litigator. She was out of work for almost a month for debilitating migraines. She was hospitalized and, after several days, she was completely pain free [when she was discharged]. I said to myself, "This is amazing." It turns out the person who admitted her to the hospital was the director of the Montefiore Headache Center. We got to talking and he took me under his wing. The rest is history. I'm a migraine sufferer, but that's not the main the reason I went into it. It really was serendipity.

**Q. Tell me about the Hartford HealthCare Headache Center.**

A. Our goal is to build something that's not being done across the country, a headache program across the entire health care system from scratch. In another 3 and 1/2 to four years, it will be the largest, most comprehensive headache program in the country.

Our vision is to build a nationally renowned program. To do that, we're an academic headache program. We're not only providing the highest quality of care, we're training future leaders in headache medicine and advancing clinical care in headache medicine.

There are three arms to building a nationally renowned program. First is delivering personalized, high-quality headache care. If you look at the stats of the program, nearly 15 percent of patients are traveling from out of the State of Connecticut already. We're seeing patients from 150 towns across Connecticut.

That's really a testament of the people I work with. One patient likened it to the TV show "Cheers," where everybody knows your name. It's how patient-centered, how friendly the office staff is. That's the team of people I'm fortunate to have work with me.

The next arm is to train the future leaders in headache medicine, ... and the third arm of the program is advanced clinical research: What are the cutting-edge techniques, the devices, the treatment, the research that can help make an impact in the real world?

**Q. What is status migrainosus and why is the grant important?**

A. [People] can have a migraine for a week; they can have a migraine for a month; they can have a migraine for three months. It's a more severe migraine. For this subset of patients, and there are probably millions of sufferers worldwide, it's debilitating. Sometimes they don't break on their own, and what do they do then?

When we think of research, we think of "evidence-based research," randomized, double-blind controlled trials, without the physician knowing, without the patient knowing. The challenge becomes how well does the evidence from a trial apply to the care of an individual patient? For the results to be statistically valid, we have to get hundreds of thousands [of patients].

The challenge becomes because there are extensive inclusion/exclusion [criteria] – patients who are too old, too young, people whose histories are too complex – these are the patients typically visiting the headache center. This is to whom individualized medicine can provide the most appropriate answers. How do we tailor treatments to individual patients?

What we're doing is to determine whether it's possible to identify individual patients who are clear responders to certain treatments and then find common denominators that are absent to individual patients who don't respond to the same treatments and vice versa. We're going to profile people who clearly respond to treatments and people who clearly don't respond and determine the attributes that show why and how somebody responds to treatment.

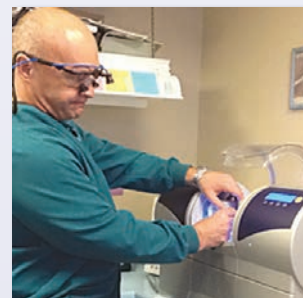
It's probably one of the most exciting things happening in migraine in the country, if not the world. **WL**

Learn more at [hartfordhealthcare.org/services/headache-center](http://hartfordhealthcare.org/services/headache-center).



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# Slice of LIFE

photos by Lisa Brisson



## The 150 Prospect Open Mic Experience and Coffee House

There were spiritual songs of Christian contemporary music, original pieces with humorous political overtones as well as covers of songs ranging from Adele to Steely Dan and Townes Van Zandt. The performers all filled the 150 Prospect Open Mic Experience and Coffee House with a warm and welcoming vibe. Held on the second Saturday evening of each month at the Wethersfield United Methodist Church, the popular gathering is an oasis out on a Saturday night for those who love to entertain and those who welcome the intimacy and spontaneity of live music. **1.** The Praise Band of the Wethersfield United Methodist Church performs. **2.** Christina of John and Christina of Wethersfield plays the congas and sings. **3.** The We Got Rhythm duo from Bolton had the crowd clapping to their original pieces and presentation, including playing the washboard and dancing some tap steps. **4.** John of John and Christina of Wethersfield plays the harmonica and guitar. **5.** Steve from Newington entertains the crowd with his vocals and guitar playing. **6.** Cowboy Bill from Hartford played guitar and sang a scathingly funny song about the Dunkin' Donuts Stadium in Hartford. **7.** Event organizers Carol Buongiorno, Karen Cutts and Tanja Moriarty check in the performers. **8.** Natalie Vargas of East Hartford plays the flute and sings to her favorite Beatles songs. **9.** Carol Buongiorno serves as the evening's emcee. **10.** Lisa Tabtabai, Tracy Gionfriddo, Martha Arnold and Sean Moriarty make sure there is enough chili, treats and coffee for everyone.







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BY MARK DIXON  
WFSB METEOROLOGIST [AMS]



## Fog in the winter

**F**reezing Fog, also known as Ice Fog, is something we have to contend with at times, here in Connecticut.

But what exactly is it?

Well first, and most basically, let's examine 'fog'... it can form in a variety of ways. Often it develops on a night with a clear sky and a

calm wind – this is radiation fog – when the Earth cools to a temperature that water vapor condenses as the temperature gets close to, or meets the dew point (the air becomes saturated). Also, there is 'advection' fog... when warm, moist air moves over a colder surface, such as snow (this can happen even when there is wind), or even the colder water of

Long Island Sound. Water droplets suspended in the air, reduce visibility – when dense, it could drop to less than a quarter of a mile, greatly impacting travel.

So next, to qualify as 'freezing' fog – it's all about the surface temperature. When it is below freezing (32 degrees Fahrenheit), those water droplets that make up fog freeze on contact.

As this happens, untreated surfaces can become very slick, especially those surfaces that are elevated, like bridges and overpasses.

This month's article was in response to a reader/viewer's inquiry. If you have a suggestion for a topic to be addressed, or a question - send me an email: [mdixon@wfsb.com](mailto:mdixon@wfsb.com). **WL**

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